342.115 Th.

Liber, cui Titulus (**The Touch-stone of Sincerity,** &c.)

Imprimatur,

July 23. 1678.

Geo. Thorp, R^mo in Christo Patri & Dom. Dom. Gulielmo Archiep. Cant. à sac. dom.

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THE Touchstone OF SINCERITY: OR The Signs of Grace, and Symptomes of Hypocrisie, Opened in a Practical Treatise upon *Rev.* 3. 17, 18.

Being the second part of the SAINT INDEED.

By *John Flavell*, Minister of Christ. *Devon.*

הִתְקוֹשְׁשׁוּ וְקוֹשּׁוּ הַגּוֹי לֹא נִכְסָף׃ בְּטֶרֶם
לֵדֶת חוק
Zephan. 2. 1, 2.
Scrutamini vos ipsos, scrutamini; antequam pariat decretum, &c.

In legendis libris non quæramus scientiam, sed saporem. Bernard.

LONDON,
Printed by *M. White*, for *F. Tyton* at the three Daggers in *Fleetstreet*. 1679.

Several Books of this Author Printed for Richard Tomlins, R. Boulter, *and* Francis Tyton *at the three daggers in Fleet-ſtreet.*

1. THe *Seamans Compaſs*, printed for *Rich. Tomlins*. Octavo.

2. The *Seamans Companion*, containing ſix Sermons ſuited to the various conditions of *Seamen*. Printed for *Francis Tyton*. Twelves.

3. *Husbandry ſpiritualized*, or the Heavenly uſe of Earthly things. Printed for *Rob. Boulter*. Quarto.

4. A *Saint indeed*, or the great work of a Chriſtian opened and preſſed. Printed for *Rob. Boulter*. Twelves.

5. The *Fountain of life* opened, or a diſplay of *Chriſt*, in his *Eſſential*, and Mediatorial glory. Printed for *Francis Tyton*. Quarto.

6. A *Token for Mourners*, being a directive and conſolatory diſcourſe, for them that are afflicted for the death of their dear Children. Printed for *Rob. Boulter* at the Turks head in *Cornhil*. Twelves.

7. *Divine Conduct*, or the myſterie of *providence*, wherein the being and efficacy of Providence is Aſſerted and Vindicated, and the methods of providence opened, as it paſſeth with us through the ſeveral ſtages of our lives. Printed for *Fr. Tyton*.

8. The *Touchſtone of Sincerity*, being the *ſecond Part* of the *Saint Indeed*, and with the former part comprizing the great work of a Chriſtian, which conſiſts in the *faithful Tryal* of his heart, contained in this part, and the *Diligent keeping* of his heart, contained in the former part.

This

This Author hath also under his hand the *second Part* of the *Display of Christ*, containing the *Method* of grace in bringing home the *ETERNAL REDEMPTION* contrived by the *Father*, and Accomplished by the *Son*, through the Effectual *Application* of the *Spirit* unto Gods Elect: wherein the great Mysterie of our *union* and *Communion* with Christ will be Opened and Applyed, *unbelievers* invited, false *Pretenders Convicted*, Every mans claim to Christ *Examined*, and the misery of Christless persons *Bewailed*.

Which if Providence permit, may in a few months see the light.

ERRATA.

PAge 36. Line 10. for *small* r. *same*.
P. 94. l. last, for *dull* r. *due*.
P. 118. l. 8. for γενεῖ r. γενὴ.
P. 146. l. 1. blot out *ten*.
P. 173. l. 1. for *tyre*, r. *trye*.
P. 175. l. 19. for *from*, r. *with*. and l. 20. for *with*, r. *from*.
P. 178. l. 17. for *tarda*, r. *tardat*.
P. 181. line last, after *spoke*, add *of*.
P. 192. l. 8. for *the*, r. *their*.
P. 198. l. 14. for *pervenit*, r. *provenit*.
P. 208. l. 9. for *dignifie*, r. *disguise*.
P. 234. l. 3. for *lathness*, r. *lothness*, and in l. 10. of the same page blot out the figure 7.

FINIS.

THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

Reader,

AMong the difficulties and severities of true Religion, the faithful searching, and diligent keeping of our hearts are found in the first and highest rank of difficulties; these two take

up the main work of a Chriſtian betwixt them, hic labor hoc opus eſt. *I had hopes that theſe* Eſſaies *for* the ſearching of the heart, *might much ſooner have followed my former* * *for* keeping the heart: *but providence hath reſerved it for the fitteſt ſeaſon.*

* A Saint indeed.

It comes to thy hand, Reader, *in a day of ſtraits and fears, a dark and gloomy ſeaſon; when the Nations about us are made drunk with their own blood, and filled with the wine of aſtoniſhment; In a day when the cup is ready to paſs unto us, and a ſtorm ſeems to be riſing in the fears of many, and threatning the Proteſtant intereſt in theſe reformed Nations. Some men very conſiderable for piety and learning from that Scripture, Revel.* 13. 3. The deadly wound, (*viz. that given the beaſt by the reformation*) was healed, *have concluded that* Popery *will once more over-run the reformed Nations; and one of great renown*

renown in all the Churches of Christ, foretelling this furious (but short) storm, comforts the people of God with this, that it is like to fall heavieſt upon the worſhippers in the outward Court, *namely, the formal profeſſours of the times.*

Oh! How much is every man now concerned to have his eſtate and condition well cleared, and to give all diligence to make his calling and election ſure!

It ſhould both amaze and grieve a pious mind, to ſee how ſome ingenious perſons can ſit with unwearied patience and pleaſure racking their brains upon ſome dry School probleme, *or ſome nice* Mathematical point; *whilſt no reaſons or perſwaſions can prevail with them to ſpend one ſerious hour in the ſearch and ſtudy of their own hearts.*

It was the ſaying of the great Cicero, Libenter omnibus omnes opes conceſſerim, ut mihi licear, vi nullâ

interpellante, iſto modo literis vivere. *I would give all the wealth in the world that I might wholly live in my Studies, and have nothing to hinder me. What a brave offer had that been, if Heaven and the clearing of a title to it had been the ſubject-matter of thoſe ſtudies!* Crede mihi, extingui dulce eſſet, mathematicarum artium ſtudio, *ſaith another*, (i. e.) *Believe me, it were a ſweet death to dye in the ſtudy of the* mathematical arts: *and I ſhould be apt to believe it too, did I not know that eternal Judgement immediately follows death; and that they who ſtand at the door of eternity have higher matters to mind than* mathematical niceties. *To diſcern the harmonies and proportions in nature is pleaſant, but to diſcern the harmony and proportion of the* ſigns *of grace laid down in the* word, *with the* works *of grace wrought in our* ſouls, *is a far more pleaſant and neceſſary imployment; and to be extinguiſhed in ſuch a work as*

this,

this, were a lovely death indeed; blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

My friends, a day of trouble is near, a dying hour approacheth us, and when our eye-strings, and heart-strings are breaking, when we are taking the last grasp of Christ and the promises, you will then know to what purpose those hours spent in such work as this were. Search your selves, yea, search your selves before the decree bring forth, *as that text may be read*, Zeph. 2. 1, 2. *Enter into thy chamber, Christian, and shut thy door; sit close to this imployment thou art here directed to: and however times shall govern, whether it be fair, or foul weather abroad, thou shalt never repent such an expence of thy time*; Nusquam requiem inveni, nisi in libro & claustro, *said a devout soul once. I am never better, than when I am at my book, or on my knees.*

This may ſeem but a dull melancholy life to the brisk and aiery ſpirits of theſe times; but let us be content with it as it is, and leave them (if we cannot have their company) to their ſportiveneſs and frollicks, never once grudging them their ſhort and dear bought pleaſures. Aſſurance that ſin is pardoned, and Chriſt is ours; with the unſpeakable joyes that are inſeparably connected therewith is that white ſtone, and new name; which none knows but he that receives it; *for no words can poſſibly ſignifie to another what that ſoul taſtes and feels in ſuch an hour as that is.*

And be not diſcouraged at the difficulty of obtaining it, this white ſtone *is no* Philoſophers *ſtone, which no man could ever ſay, he had in his own hand; for many a Chriſtian hath really found it in waiting upon the Lord by Prayer, and diligently ſearching the Scriptures and his own heart.*

Reader,

Reader, the time will come when they that ſcoff at the ſerious diligence of the Saints, and break many a pleaſant Jeſt upon the moſt ſolemn and awful things in religion, will tremble when they ſhall hear the midnight cry, behold the Bridegroom cometh; *and ſee the lamps of all vain and formal profeſſours expire, and none admitted into the marriage, but ſuch whoſe lamps are furniſhed with oyle* (i. e.) *ſuch whoſe profeſſions and duties are enlivened and maintained by vital ſprings and principles of real grace within them.*

It is a very remarkable ſtory that Melchior Adams *records in the life of* Gobelinus. *That a little before his time there was a Play ſet forth at* Iſenach *in* Germany, *of the* wiſe *and* fooliſh Virgins: *wherein the* Virgin Mary (*who was one of the five Saints that repreſented the Wiſe Virgins, was brought in with the*

Melch. Adams in vita Gobelini perſonæ vixit Anno 1420.

the rest, telling the foolish Virgins *that cryed to her for oyle, that it was too late: and then others representing the Foolish Virgins, fell a weeping and making most bitter lamentations.*

Hereat Prince Frederick (*who was one of the spectators*) *greatly amazed, cryed out,* Quid est fides nostra Christiana, si neque Maria, neque alia Sancta exorari potest, &c. *What is our faith worth, and to what purpose are all our good works, if neither* Mary, *nor any other* Saint *can help us! And such was his consternation, that it threw him into a sore and violent disease, which ended in an* Apoplex, *whereof he dyed about four dayes after.*

If the representation of these things in a Play *ended the life of so great a man, so tragically; oh think with thy self,* Reader, *what will the effects of the Lords real appearance in the clouds of Heaven, and the mourning and wailing of the Tribes of the earth in that day be? Think I say and think again,*

and

and again, what the dismal effects of such a sight and sound will be upon all that neglect serious preparation themselves, and scoff at them that do prepare to meet the Lord.

The design of this Manual *is to bring every mans gold to the touchstone, and fire; I mean every mans grace to the tryal of the word, that thereby we may know what we are, what we have, and what we must expect and trust to at the Lords coming. I pretend not to any gift of* discerning Spirits. *Such an extraordinary gift there once was in the Church, and very necessary for those times, (wherein* Satan *was so busie, and the* Canon *of* Scripture *not compleated) which the* Apostle *calls the gift of* discerning spirits, 1 *Cor.* 12. 10. *and some are of opinion that by vertue of this gift,* Peter *discerned the Hypocrisie of* Ananias *and* Saphira, *but whatever that gift was, it is utterly ceased now; no man can pretend to it, but the ordinary aids and assistances of*

the

the Spirit are with us ſtill, and the lively Oracles *are among us ſtill, to them we may freely go for reſolution of all doubts, and deciſion of perplexed caſes: and thus we may diſcern our own Spirits, though we want the extraordinary gift of diſcerning other mens Spirits.*

I have little to ſay of this Treatiſe *in thy hands, more than that it is well aimed, and deſigned, however it be managed: the ear tryes words, as the mouth taſteth meat; theſe things will reliſh according to the palates it meets with.*

It is not the pleaſing, but profiting of men that I have herein laboured for. I know of nothing in it that is like to wound the upright, or ſlightly heal the hypocrite, by crying peace, peace, when there is no peace. Scripture light hath been my Cynoſura, *and with that thread in my hand, I have followed the ſearch of Hypocriſie through the labyrinths of the heart. Some aſſiſtance I*

hope

hope I have had alſo from experience; for Scripture and experience are ſuch relatives, and the tye betwixt them ſo diſcernable, as nothing in Nature can be more ſo. What we feel in our hearts, we might have read in the Scriptures before ever we felt it.

That the bleſſing of God may go forth with it, and accompany it to thy Soul, Reader, is the hearts deſire and prayer of

Thine and the Churches
Servant in Chriſt,

John Flavell.

THE Touchstone of Sincerity: OR, The Signs of Grace, and Symptomes of Hypocrisie, Opened in a Treatise upon Revel. III. 17, 18.

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing: And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me GOLD TRYED in the FIRE, that thou mayest be rich, &c.

CHAP. I.

Wherein the Text is opened, and the Doctrines propounded.

ALthough the *Revelation* be a *compendium* of intricate visions and obscure prophecies, containing almost as many mysteries as words: yet that cloud overshadows the prophetical part only; which begins where

Tot mysteria quot verba. Hieron.

where this Chapter (with the doctrinal part) ends: here the waters are found no deeper than in other places of Scripture; but if we go a little farther, they become an overflowing flood: hitherto we touch ground, but a ſtep farther delivers us into the deeps, which are above the heads of the talleſt Chriſtians: here the Spirit ſpeaks *doctrinally*, and perſpicuouſly; but in the following Chapters *myſtically*, and in great obſcurity.

Seven *Epiſtles* are found in this Doctrinal part, immediately dictated from Heaven, and ſent by *John* to the *ſeven Churches of Aſia*, to inſtruct, correct, encourage, and confirm them, as their ſeveral caſes required.

My Text falls in the laſt *Epiſtle*, ſent to the Church of *Laodicea*; the worſt, and moſt degenerate of all the reſt. The beſt had their defects, and infirmities; but this laboured under the moſt dangerous diſeaſe of all. The faireſt face of the ſeven had ſome *ſpot*, but a dangerous diſeaſe ſeems to have invaded the very heart of this.

Not that all were equally guilty, but the greateſt part (from which the whole is denominated) were *lukewarm* profeſſours;

ſours; who had a name to live, but were dead, who being never throughly engaged in Religion, eaſily embraced that principle of the *Gnoſticks* which made it ἀδιάφορον a matter of indifferency to own or deny Chriſt in time of perſecution. The moſt ſaving Doctrine that ſome profeſſours are acquainted with. This lukewarm temper Chriſt hated, he was ſick of them, and loathed their indifferency: *I wiſh* (ſaith he) ver. 16. *thou wert either cold or hot*; an expreſſion of the ſame amount with that in 1 Kings 18. 21. *how long halt you betwixt two opinions?* and is manifeſtly tranſlated from the qualities of *water*, which is either *cold*, or *hot*; or *lukewarm*, a middle temper betwixt both, and more nauſeous to the ſtomach than either of the former. *Cold* is the complexion and natural temper of thoſe that are wholly alienated and eſtranged from Chriſt and Religion. *Hot*, is the gracious temper of thoſe that know and love Jeſus Chriſt in an

Frigidos vocat planè à Chriſto alienos. Fervidos, verâ Chriſti cognitione in excellenti gradu præditos. Tepidos, qui cum Chriſtiani dici velint, nec cauſam religionis ſerio agunt, nec vitam confeſſioni conformem dignamque ducunt. Sol. Glaſſ. Rhet. Sacra par. 3. p. 165.

an excelling degree. *Lukewarm*, or *tepid*, is the temper of those who have too much Religion to be esteemed Carnal, and too little to be truly spiritual; a generation that is too *politick* to venture much, and yet so *foolish* as to lose all: they are loth to forsake truth *wholly*, and more loth to follow it too *closely*: the *form* of Religion they affect as an *honour*, the *power* of it they judge a *burden*.

This is that temper which the Lord hates, and this was the disease of *Laodicea*, which Christ the great and only heart-*Anatomist* and soul-*Physitian* discovers in *verse* 17. and prescribes a cure for it in *verse* 18. So that the words resolve themselves into two parts:

viz. { First, A faithful discovery, } the disease of *Laodicea*.
{ Secondly, A proper remedy, of } the disease of *Laodicea*.

1. First, Their disease is faithfully discovered to them, both in its symptomes, cause, and aggravation.

First, Its *Symptome*, an unconcerned, indifferent, regardless spirit in matters of

of Religion; nor hot, nor cold; the true temper of *Formal professours*, who never engaged themselves throughly and heartily in the wayes of God, but can take, or leave as times govern, and worldly interest come to be concerned.

Secondly, its cause and root, which is the defect and want of the truth, and power of inward grace; noted in these expressions, *Thou art wretched, and miserable, poor, blind, and naked*; (i. e.) thou art destitute of a real principle, a solid work of grace; these five *Epithets* do all point at one and the same thing; namely, the defectiveness and rottenels of their foundation. The two first, ὁ ταλαίπωρος καὶ ὁ ἐλεεινὸς, *wretched* and *miserable*; are more general, concluding them in a sad condition, a very sinful and lamentable estate: the three last, πτωχὸς καὶ τυφλὸς καὶ γυμνὸς, viz. *poor, blind* and *naked*, are more particular, pointing at those grand defects, and flaws in the foundation, which made their condition so wretched and miserable.

First, *poor*, that is, void of righteousness, and true holiness before God; these are the true

πτωχὸς, *destitutus Justitiâ & Sanctitate veræ coram Deo.* Grotius.

Riches

riches of Christians, and whoso wants them, is poor, and miserable; how rich soever he be in gifts of the mind, or treasures of the earth.

Secondly, *blind*, (i. e.) without spiritual illumination, and so neither knowing their disease, nor their remedy; the evil of sin, or necessity of Christ. *Durham in Loc.*

τυφλὸς nec morbum sciens, nec remedium.

Thirdly, *naked*, without *Christ*, and his righteousness. Sin is the souls shame and nakedness. Christs pure and perfect righteousness is its covering, or *garment*: this they wanted, how richly soever their bodies were adorned. These were *Laodiceans*, (i. e.) a just, or righteous people; (according to the notation of that word) whose garments with which they covered themselves, were made of the home-spun thread of their own righteousness.

γυμνὸς carens justitiâ, quæ vestitus est Christianorum. Pareus.

Thirdly, The disease of *Laodicea* is here opened to them in its *aggravations*.

Thou saiest I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; but knowest not, &c.

To be really graceleſs, and Chriſtleſs is a miſerable condition; but to be ſo, and yet confidently perſwaded of the contrary, is moſt miſerable: to have the very ſymptomes of death upon us, and yet tell thoſe that pity us, we are as well as they, is lamentable indeed.

Nil miſerius miſero non miſerante ſeipſum.

O the efficacy of a ſpiritual deluſion! This was their *diſeaſe*, *graceleſneſs*, and the *aggravation of it*, was their *ſenſeleſneſs*.

2. Secondly, We have a proper remedy preſcribed verſe 18. *I counſel thee to buy of me gold tryed in the fire, that thou mayeſt be rich*, &c. In which we have to conſider, Firſt, what is preſcribed for the cure. Secondly, where it is to be had. Thirdly, how to be obtained.

Firſt, what are the remedies preſcribed, and they are three; *gold*, *white rayment*, and *eye-ſalve*. Firſt, *gold*, the cure of poverty; yea, *gold tryed in the fire*, (*i. e.*) grace that hath been variouſly proved already, and the more it is proved, the more its truth will be conſpicuous. The next is *white rayment*, the remedy againſt nakedneſs. And laſtly *eye-ſalve*, the effectual cure of blindneſs.

Under

Under all these choice *Metaphors*, more choice and excellent things are shadowed, even spiritual graces, real holiness, more precious than Gold. Christs imputed righteousness, the richest garment in all the wardrobe of heaven; and spiritual illumination, the most excellent *Collyrium* or eye-salve that ever was or can be applyed to the mental eye or understanding of man in this world.

Secondly, where these precious remedies may be had, and you find Christ hath the *Monopoly* of them all; *buy of me*, saith Christ in the text; he is the *repository* of all graces. Angels, Ministers, Ordinances, cannot furnish you with them, without Christ.

Hoc μονοπόλιον est Christi, extra quod nulla est salus.

Thirdly, how they may be obtained from him; *buy of me*; on this place *Estius*, and others build their doctrine of merit; which is to build a superstructure of hay and stubble, upon a foundation of gold. The exigence of the very text it self destroys such conceits: for what have they that are poor, wretched, miserable, and want all things, to give as a price, or by way of merit for those inestimable treasures

treasures of grace? *Buying* therefore in this place, can signifie or intend no more than the acquisition, compassing, or obtaining these things from *Jesus Christ* in the use of such means and methods as he hath appointed, and in the use of them we merit grace no more, than the *patient* merits of his *Physitian* by coming to him, and carefully following his prescriptions in the use of such *medicaments* as he freely gives him: and that place *Esa.* 55. 1. (from which this phrase seems to be borrowed) fully clears it; *he that hath no money, let him come, and buy wine, and milk; without money, and without price.*

From all which, these three Observations fairly offer themselves to us.

Doct. 1.

That many professours of Religion are under very great and dangerous mistakes in their profession.

Doct. 2.

That true grace is exceeding precious, and greatly enriches the soul that possesseth it.

Doct. 3.

That only is to be accounted true grace, which is able to endure all thoſe tryals appointed, or permitted for the diſcovery of it.

The firſt doctrine naturally riſes out of the ſcope of the Text, which is to awaken and convince unſound Profeſſours.

The ſecond from the uſe the Holy Ghoſt makes of the beſt and choiceſt things in Nature, to ſhadow forth the ineſtimable worth and preciouſneſs of grace.

And the Third, from that particular, and moſt ſignificant *metaphor* of *gold tryed in the fire*; by which I here underſtand, a real and ſolid work of grace, evidencing it ſelf to be ſo, in all the proofs and tryals that are made of it; for whatſoever is probational of grace, and puts its foundneſs and ſincerity to the teſt, is that to it which fire is to gold: in this ſenſe it is uſed in Scripture, Pſal. 66. 10. *Thou haſt tryed us as ſilver is tryed:* and Zach. 13. 9. *I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as ſilver is refined, and try*

try them as gold is tryed. So that whatsoever it is which examines and tryes grace, whether it be ſound, and ſincere, that is the *fire Chriſt* here ſpeaks of; and ſuch grace as abides theſe tryals, is the gold here intended.

CHAP. II.

Wherein the first Doctrine is opened and improved briefly as a preliminary discourse to the principal subject herein designed.

Doct. 1.

That many professours of Religion are under very great and dangerous mistakes in their profession.

SECT. I.

ALL flattery is dangerous, Self-flattery is more dangerous, but self-flattery in the business of Salvation is the most dangerous of all.

To pretend to the good we know we have not, is *gross hypocrisie*; to opine and perswade our selves of the good we have not, though we think we have it, is *formal*

formal hypocrisie; and this was the case of those self-deceivers in the text.

My design in this discourse is not to shake the well-built hopes of any man, or beget groundless Jealousies; but to discover the real dangerous flaws in the foundation of many mens hopes for heaven: every thing is as its foundation is, and *debile fundamentum fallit opus*; that failing, all fails.

There is a twofold self-suspicion or fear in Gods own people. The one is a fear of *caution*, awaking the soul to the use of all preventive means for avoiding danger; this is *Laudable*. The other a groundless suspicion of reigning hypocrisie tending only to despondency; this is *Culpable*: by the former the soul is guarded against *danger*, by the later it is betrayed into needless trouble; and debarred from *peace*.

Good men have sometimes more fear than they ought, and wicked men have less than they ought: the former do sometimes shut their eyes against the *fair evidences* of their own *graces*, the later shut their eyes against the *sad evidences* of their *sin* and *misery*. This is an evil in both, but not equally dangerous; for he

that ſhuts his eyes againſt his own graces and priviledges, loſeth but his peace and comfort for a time; but he that ſhuts his eyes againſt the evidences of his ſin and miſery, loſeth his precious ſoul to all eternity! of this latter ſort of *ſelf-deceivers* the world is full, and theſe are the men I am concerned with in this point.

O that ſome men had leſs trouble! and oh that ſome had more! If the *fooliſh Virgins* had been leſs *confident*, they had certainly been more *ſafe*, *Matth.* 25. If thoſe glorious profeſſours in *Matth.* 7. 22. had not ſhut their eyes againſt their own *hypocriſie*, Chriſt had not ſhut againſt them the door of Salvation and glory. *Ananias*, and *Saphira*; *Hymeneus*, and *Philetus*; *Alexander*, and *Demas*: with multitudes more of that ſort, are the ſad inſtances and proofs of this point. It is ſaid, Prov. 30. 12. *There is a generation that is pure in their own eyes, and yet is not waſhed from their filthineſs.* Through what falſe ſpectacles do the men of that Generation look upon their own ſouls? The men of that generation are multiplyed in this generation: never was any age over-run with a generation of vain, ſelf-couzening, formal profeſſours, as this generation is.

Three

Three things I ſhall here endeavour to do:

(1.) To give evidence beyond contradiction, to this ſad truth; That among profeſſours are found many ſelf-deceivers.

(2.) To aſſign the true cauſes and reaſons why it is ſo. And,

(3.) Improve it in thoſe practical inferences the point affords.

SECT. II.

THat there are multitudes of ſuch ſelf-deceivers among Profeſſours, will appear;

1. Firſt, By this, that there are every where to be found many more *profeſſours*, than *Converts*. Unregenerate profeſſours, whoſe Religion is but the effect of Education. Chriſtianity by the favour of an early Providence was the firſt comer, it firſt beſpake them for it ſelf; theſe are Chriſtians of an humane Creation, rather born, than new-born believers. Now, all *theſe* are ſelf-deceived, and haſting to damnation, under the efficacy of a ſtrong deluſion; *for if a man think himſelf to be ſomething, when he is nothing, he deceiveth*

himſelf, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, *Gal.* 6. 3. Surely our birth-priviledge, without the new birth, is *nothing*; yea, worſe than *nothing*, as to our laſt, and great account; that which ſtands for *a great ſumm* in our *Arithmetick*, it's nothing, it is but a *Cypher* you ſee, in God's. *Except a man be born again*, (ſay the lips of truth) *he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God*, Joh. 3. 3.

Poor ſelf-deceivers, ponder thoſe words of *Chriſt*; you have hitherto thought your civil *education*, your dead and *heartleſs* duties enough to denominate you Chriſtians before God; but go now, and learn what that Scripture meaneth; and be aſſured, you muſt experience another manner of *converſion*, or elſe it is impoſſible for you to eſcape eternal *damnation*.

2. Secondly, It is too manifeſt by this, that many profeſſours are only acquainted with the *externals* of Religion; and all their duties are no more but a complyance of the outward man with the commands of God: this is the ſuperficial Religion which deceives and betrays multitudes into eternal miſery. True Religion ſeats it ſelf in the inward man, and acts effectually upon the vital powers: killing ſin in the heart, and purging its deſigns

and

and delights from carnality and selfishness; engaging the heart for God, and setting it as a bow in its full bent for him, in the approaches we make to him: but how little are many Professours acquainted with these things!

Alas! if this be all we have to stand upon, how dangerous a station is it! what is external conformity, but an artificial imitation of that which only lives in the souls of good men? Thus was *Jehu* deceived; he did many acts of external obedience to Gods command, *but Jehu took no heed to walk in the way of the Lord God of Israel with his heart*, 2 Kings 10. 31. and this was his overthrow.

This also was the ruine of those formalists, *Ezek.* 33. 31. they came and sate before the Lord as his people; The word was to them as a lovely song; mightily charmed with the modulation of the *Prophets* voice, and his lively gestures; but all the while their hearts went after their covetousness: and what abundance of such pharisaical, superficial Religion is every where to be found?

3. Thirdly, It appears by this, that every tryal made by sufferings upon professours, blows away multitudes like dry

leaves in *Autumn* by a ſtormy wind; many fall from their *own ſtedfaſtneſs* in ſhaking times: proſperity multiplies vain Profeſſours, and adverſity purges the *Church* of them. *Then ſhall many be offended*, Mat. 24. 10. This the Scripture every where *marks* as a *ſymptome* of Hypocriſie, Pſal. 78. 8. *A generation that ſet not their heart aright: and whoſe ſpirit was not ſtedfaſt with God.* 1 John 2. 19. *But they went out, that they might be made manifeſt, that they were not of us.* Matth. 13. 21. *For when tribulation or perſecution ariſeth becauſe of the word; by and by he is offended:* but ſhould one have told them in the dayes of their firſt profeſſion, that all their zeal and labour in Religion would have ended in this; it is like they would have replyed as *Hazael* to the man of God, 2 King. 8. 13. *But what is thy ſervant a dog, that he ſhould do this great thing!* quantum mutatus ab illo?

Oh how unlike is their dark and dirty evening, to their glorious and hopeful morning! theſe Profeſſours have more of the *Moon* than of the *Sun*; little light, leſs heat; but many changes: they deceive many, yea, they deceive themſelves, but cannot deceive God. During the calm, what a flouriſh do they make! and with

with what gallantry do they sail! by and by you may hear *horrendas tempestates*, and soon after you may see *flenda naufragia*, a dreadful shipwrack, after a furious storm; and no wonder, for they wanted that ἴδιον στηριγμὸν, that ballast and establishment in themselves that would have kept them tite and stable. 1 Pet. 3. 17.

4. Fourthly, It is too apparent by this, that many Professours secretly indulge and shelter beloved lusts under the wings of their profession. This like a worm at the root will wither and kill them at last, how fragrant soever they may seem to be for a season. *Gideon* had seventy *Sons*, and one *Bastard*; but that one *Bastard* was the death of all his seventy *Sons*.

Some men have many excellent gifts, and perform multitudes of duties, but one secret sin indulged and allowed, will destroy them all at last. He that is *partial* as to the mortification of his sins, is undoubtedly *hypocritical* in his profession. If *Davids* evidence was good for his integrity, surely such Professours will never clear themselves of hypocrisie. *I was also upright before him, and kept my self from mine*

mine iniquity, ſaith he, *Pſal.* 18. 23. this is the right eye, and right hand which every ſincere Chriſtian muſt pluck out, and cut off, *Matth.* 5. 29, 30.

Which is a *Metaphor* from *Chirurgeons*, whoſe manner it is when the whole is in danger by any part, to cut it off, *ne pars ſincera trahatur*; leſt all periſh.

Their ſuppreſſing ſome luſts raiſeth their confidence, the indulging of one razeth the foundation of their hopes, and thus they deceive themſelves.

5. Fifthly, This alſo manifeſts the ſelf-deceits of many *profeſſours*, That the ſecret duties of Religion, or at leaſt the ſecret intercourſe of the ſoul with God in them is a ſecret hid from the knowledge and experience of many *profeſſours*.

To attend the Ordinances of God in the ſeaſons of them they know, to pray in their families at the ſtated hours thereof they know; but to retire from all the world into their *Cloſets*, and there to pour out their hearts before the Lord, they know not.

To feel ſomewhat within, paining them like an empty hungry ſtomach until they have eaten that hidden Manna, that bread in ſecret; I mean refreſhed their ſouls

souls with real communion with the Lord there; this is a Mysterie locked up from the acquaintance of many that call themselves *Christians*; and yet this is made a *Characteristical note* of a sincere Christian by *Christ* himself in *Matth.* 6. 6.

O Reader, If thy heart were right with God, and thou didst not cheat thy self with a vain profession, thou wouldst have frequent business with God, which thou wouldst be loth thy dearest friend, or the wife of thy bosome should be privy to: *Non est religio ubi omnia patent.* Religion doth not lay all open to the eyes of men. Observed duties maintain our *credit*, but secret duties maintain our *life*. It was the saying of an Heathen about his secret correspondency with his friend, What need the world be acquainted with it? *thou and I are Theatre enough to each other*: There are enclosed pleasures in Religion, which none but renewed spiritual souls do feelingly understand.

6. Lastly, How many more profess Religion in these dayes, than ever made Religion their business! *Philosophy* tells us there is a τὸ ἔργον, and a παρεργον, a *main-business*, and a *by-business*; the same is found in Religion also.

There

There are *that give themſelves to the Lord*, 2 Cor. 8. 5. whoſe converſation, or trade is in heaven, *Phil.* 3. 18. the end or ſcope of whoſe life is Chriſt, *Heb.* 13. 7, 8. who give Religion the precedency both in time and affection, *Pſal.* 5. 3. *Rom.* 12. 11. who are conſtant and indefatigable in the work of the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58.

And there are alſo that take up Religion rather for *oſtentation*, than for an *occupation*, who never mind the duties of Religion, but when they have nothing elſe to do; and when their outward man is engaged in the duties of it, yet their heart is not in it; they hear, they pray, ἡ ὃ ψυχὴ ἔξω, as *Chryſoſtome* ſpeaks, but their ſouls, their thoughts and minds are abroad. It is not their buſineſs to have fellowſhip with God in duties, to get their luſts mortified, their hearts tryed, and their ſouls conformed to the image of God in holineſs.

They Pray as if they prayed not, and hear as if they heard not: and if they feel no power in Ordinances, no quickening in duties, it is no diſappointment at all to them; for theſe were not their deſigns in drawing nigh to God in theſe appointments.

And

And thus you see what numbers of Professours deceive themselves.

SECT. III.

AND if we seriously enquire into the grounds and causes of this self-deceit among Professours, we shall find these *four* things conspiring to delude and cheat them, in the great concern of their salvation.

1. First, The natural deceitfulness of the heart, than which nothing is more treacherous, and false, *Jer.* 17. 9. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked עָקֹב הוּא מִכֹּל *Supplantativum cor præ omnibus*, *Ar. Mont.* the heart is the greatest *supplanter*, the most crafty and subtil cheat of all; it deceives us as *Jacob* did his brother, (to whose name this text alludes.) It defeats us of our heavenly heritage, as *Jacob* supplanted him in his earthly one; while we are gone a hunting after earthly trifles. And wherein its deceitfulness principally appears, you may see by the solemn *Caveat* of the *Apostle James* 1. 22. wherein he warns us to beware, that in hearing the word we deceive not our selves

selves by false reasonings; for so παραλογιζόμενοι ἑαυτοὺς imports, and may be strictly rendred *false reasoning themselves*, namely, by making false *syllogisms*; whereby they misconclude about their spiritual and eternal estate and condition, and befool themselves.

The time will come when a mans own heart will be found to have the chief hand in his ruine; and what *Apollodorus* did but fancy his heart said to him, some mens hearts will tell them in earnest when they come to the place of misery and torment; ἐγὼ σοὶ τούτων αἰτία. I have been the cause of all this. I have betrayed thee into all these torments. It was my *lazines*, my *credulity*, my averseness to the wayes of strict godliness, mortification, and self-denyal have for ever undone thee. When thou sateſt under the convincing truths of the Gospel; it was I that whispered those Atheistical surmises into thine ear, perswading thee all thou heardst was but the intemperate heat of an hot brained zealot; when the Judgements of God were denounced, and the misery thou now feelest forewarned and threatned, it was I that whispered what the tongue of another once spake out, *Tunc credam, cùm illuc*

illuc venero. I will believe it when I come thither.

Surely this is a great truth which was observed by the wisest of men, *he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool*, Prov. 28. 26. and thousands of such fools are to be found among Professours.

2. Secondly, *Satan* is a chief conspirator in this treacherous design; *we are not ignorant* (saith the Apostle) *of his devices*; νοήματα his Sophistry and sleights, 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. his μεθοδείας, trains and methods of temptation, which are throughly studied, and artificially moulded and ordered; even such *Systems* as *Tutors* and *Professours* of *Arts* and *Sciences* have, and read over to their *Auditors*; as one judiciously observes to be the import of that Text, *Eph.* 6. 11. Nor is it to be wondred at, considering his vast knowledge, deep malice, and long experience in this Art of cheating; together with the great corruption and pronity of the hearts of men to close with his devices, and believe his impostures; that so vast a number of souls are taken *captive by him at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. 26.

Dr. *Goodwin* Child of Light.

'Tis

'Tis the God of this world that blinds the minds of them that believe not; 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. *The God of this world* (so call'd by a *Mimesis*) who leads a *world* of poor deluded wretches to destruction, having first *blinded their minds*, that is deluded, and with his hellish art practised upon their understanding, that τὸ ἡγεμόνικον, leading and directive faculty, which is to the soul what eyes are to the body.

I remember *Basil* brings in *Satan* thus insulting against *Christ*, I have them, I have them: for all thy blood and miracles, thy wooings and beseechings, thy knockings and strivings; I have couzened thee of them at the very gates of Heaven: for all their illuminations, and tasting of the powers of the World to come; I have shipwrackt them in the very mouth of the haven.

3. Thirdly, The *common* works found in *unregenerate* souls, deceive many; who cannot distinguish them from the *special* works of the *spirit* in Gods *Elect*: see that startling Scripture, *Heb.* 6. 4. where you find among the common operations of the Spirit upon *Apostates*, *illumination*, which gives perspicuity to their minds in discerning spiritual truths, and that frequently

quently with more diſtinctneſs and depth of Judgement than ſome gracious ſouls attain unto; beſides, it is the matter out of which many rare and excellent gifts are formed in admirable variety; which are ſingularly uſeful to others as they are exerciſed in expounding the Scriptures, defending the truths of Chriſt by ſolid arguments, preaching, praying, *&c.* and make the ſubject of them renowned and honoured in the Church of God; whileſt mean time, they are dazled with their own ſplendour, and fatally ruined by them.

There you find alſo *Taſting* as well as enlightening. So that they ſeem to abound not only in *knowledge* but in *ſenſe* alſo (*i. e.*) in ſome kind of *experience* of what they know; for experience is the bringing of things to the Teſt of ſpiritual ſenſe. They do *taſte* or experience the good that comes by the promiſes of the word, and diſcoveries of heaven and glory; though they feel not experimentally the transforming efficacy of theſe things upon their own ſouls.

Now that *illumination* furniſhing them with excellent gifts (as before was noted) enabling them to *Aſſent* to Goſpel truths,

which

which the Scripture calls faith, *Acts* 8. 12. and working in them *conviction* of sin, 1 *Sam.* 15. 24. reformation of life, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. and touching their affections also with transient joy in the discovery of those truths;

And this *Taste* which comes so near to the *experience* which the sanctified soul enjoyes: these things seem to put their condition beyond all controversie, and lay a foundation for their ill-built confidence; nothing is more apt to beget and nourish such a confidence, than the meltings and workings of our affections about spiritual things; for as a *grave Divine* Mr. *A. Burges.* hath well observed, such a man seems to have all that is required of a Christian, and to have attained the very end of all knowledge, which is operation and influence upon the affections. When they shall find *heat* in their *affections*, as well as *light* in their *minds*; how apt are they to say (as these self-deceivers in the *Text* did) they *are rich, and have need of nothing!* Now of all the false signs of grace, by which men couzen themselves, none are so dangerous and destructive to souls, as those that come neerest true ones: never doth

doth *Satan* more effectually and securely manage his cheats, than when he is transformed into an *Angel of light.*

Among this sort of self-deceivers, how many gifted men, and among that sort some imployed in the office of the Ministry, will be found! whose daily imployment being about spiritual things, studying, preaching, praying, *&c.* conclude themselves sanctified persons, because they are versant about sacred imployments, as if the *subject* must be, because the *object* is sacred. Oh that such would seriously ponder those two Scriptures, Mat. 7. 22. *Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful things?* and 1 Cor. 9. 27.——*lest that by any means, when I have preached unto others, I my self should be a cast away.*

4. Lastly, To add here no more, this strengthens self-deceit exceedingly in many, *viz.* their observations of, and comparing themselves with others. Thus the *Pharisees,* (those gross self-deceivers) *trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others,* Luke 18. 9. their low rating of others, gave them

that

that high rate and value of themselves: and thus the proverb is made good, *regnat luscus inter cecos*, he that hath but one eye, is a King among the blind.

Thus the false *Apostles* cheated and befool'd themselves, 2 Cor. 10. 12. *but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.* God hath not made one man a measure or standard to another man, but his Word is the common beam or scale to try all men.

These men are as sharp sighted to note other mens evils, as their own excellencies, to eye the miscarriages of others with *derision*, and their own performances with *admiration.*

They bless themselves when they behold the prophane in their impieties, Luke 18. 11. *God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, or even as this Publican, q. d.* O what a Saint am I in comparison of these *miscreants*! The *Pharisees* Religion you see runs all upon *nots*; a *negative holiness* is enough to him; and the measure he takes of it is by comparison of himself, with others more externally vile than himself. A Christian may say with praise and

and humility, *I am not as ſome men are*, but though *he know nothing by himſelf, yet is he not thereby juſtified*, 1 Cor. 4. 4. he neither rakes together the enormities of the vileſt, or the infirmities of the holieſt to juſtifie and applaud himſelf as theſe ſelf-deceivers do. And theſe are the cauſes and occaſions of that general deception, under which ſo great a part of the profeſſing world bow down, and periſh.

SECT. IV.

3. IN the laſt place I ſhall improve this point variouſly according to the importance and uſefulneſs of it, with as much brevity and cloſeneſs of Application as I can: And

Uſe 1.

Shall be for *Caution* to profeſſours; before I tell you what uſe you ſhould make of it, I muſt tell you what uſe you may not make of it.

Firſt, don't make this uſe of it, to conclude from what hath been ſaid that all *profeſſours* are but a pack of *hypocrites*, and that there is no truth nor integrity in any man:

man: this is both intolerable *arrogance* to ascend the *Throne* of God, and unparallel'd *uncharitableness* to judge the *hearts* of all men.

Some men are as apt to conclude others to be Hypocrites, by measuring their hearts by their own, as others are to conclude themselves *Saints*, by comparing their own *excellencies* with other mens *corruptions*: but blessed be God there is some grain among the heap of chaff, some true *Diamonds* among the counterfeit Stones. The *Devil* hath not the whole piece; a remnant according to election belongs really to the Lord.

2. Secondly, don't make this use of it, that assurance must needs be impossible, because so many Professours are found to be self-deceivers.

That assurance is one of the great difficulties in Religion, is a great truth; but that it is therefore unattainable in this world, is very false. *Popish doctrine* indeed makes it impossible, but that doctrine is practically confuted in the comfortable experience of many souls: all are commanded to strive for it: 2 Pet. 1. 10. *give diligence to make your calling and Election sure*: and some have the happiness to obtain

obtain it: 2 Tim. 1. 12. *for I know whom I have believed, and I am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*

Let the *Similar* works upon *Hypocrites* resemble as much as they will the *saving* works of the Spirit upon believers; yet God doth alwayes, and the Saints do *sometimes* plainly discern the difference.

3. Thirdly, don't make this use of it, to conceal and hide the truths or graces of God, or refuse to *profess*, and *confess* them before men, because many professours deceive themselves, and others also; by a vain profession, because another professeth what he hath not, must you therefore hide or deny what you have? 'Tis true, the *possession* of grace and truth in your own souls is that which saves you; but the *profession* and *confession* of it, is that which honours God, and edifies; yea, sometimes is the instrument to save others: it's your comfort that you feel it, it's others comfort to know that you do so. *Ostentation* is your sin, but a serious and humble *profession* is your duty, *Rom.* 10. 9.

SECT. V.

Use 2.

HAving shewed you in the former *Section* what *use* you ought *not* to make of this Doctrine, I will next shew you what *use* you *ought* to make of it; and surely you cannot improve this point to a better purpose than from it to take warning, and look to your selves, that you be not of that number who deceive themselves in their *profession*. If this be so, suffer me closely to press that great *Apostolical Caution*, 1 Cor. 10. 12. *Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall.* O professours, look carefully to your foundation; be not high minded, but fear: you have it may be done and suffered many things in and for Religion; you have excellent gifts, and sweet comforts, a warm zeal for God, and high confidence of your integrity; all this may be *right* (for ought I or (it may be) you know) but yet 'tis possible it may be *false* also; you have sometimes judged your selves, and pronounced your selves upright; but remember your *final sentence* is not yet pro-

pronounced by your Judge. And what if God weigh you over again in his more equal ballance, and should say *Mene tekel*, thou art weighed in the ballance, and art found wanting; what a confounded man wilt thou be under such a sentence! *Quæ splendent in conspectu hominis, sordent in conspectu Judicis*; things that are highly esteemed of men, are an abomination in the sight of God; he seeth not as man seeth.

Thy heart may be false, and thou not know it; yea, it may be false, and thou strongly confident of its integrity.

The Saints may approve thee, and God condemn thee, Rev. 3. 1. *Thou hast a name that thou livest, but thou art dead*: men may say there's a true *Nathanael*, and God may say, there's a self couzening *Pharisee*.

Reader, thou hast heard of *Judas* and *Demas*, of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*; once renowned and famous Professours, and thou hast heard what they proved at last.

Take heed their case be not thine own; do they not all as it were with one mouth cry to thee, O Professour! if thou wilt not come where we are, don't couzen your

self as we did: if thou expectest a better place and *lot*, be sure thou get a sincerer *heart*: had we been more *self-suspicious*, we had been more *safe*.

I would not scare you with *needless jealousies*, but I would fain prevent *fatal mistakes*. Don't you find your hearts deceitful in many things? don't they shuffle over secret duties? don't they *censure* the small evils in others, which they scarce *reprove* in your selves? are there not many by-ends in duties? don't you find they are far less affected with a great deal of service and honour done to God by others, than with a little by your selves?

Is it not hard to look upon other mens excellencies without *envy*, or upon your own without *pride*?

And are you not troubled with a *busie devil*, as well as with a bad heart? hath not he that circuits the whole world observed you? hath he not studied your constitution sins, and found out that sin which most easily besets you? hath he less malice against your souls than others? Surely you are in the very thick of temptations; thousands of snares are round about you. Oh how difficultly are the righteous saved! how hard to be upright!

how

how few even of the professing world win Heaven at last!

O therefore search your hearts, Professours, and let this caution go down to your very reins; *let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall.*

Away with rash uncharitable censures of others, and be more just and severe in censuring your selves. Away with dry and unprofitable controversies, and spend your thoughts upon this great question, Am I found, or am I rotten at heart? am I a new creature, or an old creature still in the new creatures dress and habit? Beg the Lord that you be not deceived in that great point (your integrity) what ever else you may be mistaken in. Pray that you be not given up to an heedless, careless, and vain spirit, and then have Religious duties for a *Rattle* to still and quiet your Consciences.

Surely, that ground-work can never be laid too sure, upon which so great a stress as thy soul and eternity must depend. It will not repent thee (I dare promise) when thou comest to dye, that thou hast imployed thy time and strength to this end: whilest others are panting after the dust of the earth, and saying, who will

shew us any good? be thou panting after the assurances of the love of God, and crying who will shew me how to make my calling and election sure?

O deceive not your selves with names and notions! think not, because you are for a stricter way of worship, or because you associate with (and are accordingly denominated) one of the more reformed Professours; that therefore you are safe enough: alas! how small an interest have titles, modes, and denominations in Religion? Suppose a curious *Artist* take a Lump of lead and refine it, and cast it into the mould; whence it comes forth shining, and bearing some noble figure, suppose of an *Eagle*, yet it is but a leaden *Eagle*. Suppose the figure of a *man*, and that in the most exact lineaments and proportions, yet still it is but a *leaden man*. Nay, let it bear the figure of an *Angel*, it is but a *leaden Angel*: for the base and ignoble matter is the same it was, though the figure be not. Even so, Take an Unregenerate carnal man, let his life be reformed, and his tongue refined; and call him a zealous *Conformist*, or a strict *Non-Conformist*; call him a *Presbyterian*, an *Independent* or what you will; he is all

the

the while but a carnal Conformist, or Non-conformist; an unregenerate Presbyterian, a carnal Independent; for the *nature* is still the same, though the stamp and figure his profession gives him, be not the same.

O my friends believe it, fine names, and brave words, are of little value with God. God will no more spare you for these, than *Samuel* did *Agag* for his delicate Ornaments, and spruce appearance: either make sure the root of the matter, or the *leaves* of a vain Profession will not long cover you.

To be deceived by another is bad enough, but to deceive our selves is a thousand times worse.

To deceive our selves in truths of the *superstructure* is bad, and they that do so shall suffer loss; 1 *Cor.* 3. 12. but to deceive our selves in the *foundation* is a desperate deceit, and shipwracks all our hope and happiness at once.

If any man lose his *money* by a *cheat* it *troubles him*, but to lose his soul by a cheat will *confound him*: if a man lose an eye, an ear, a hand, a foot; yet *omnia Deus dedit duplicia*, as *Chrysostome* speaks; God hath given these members double; so that

there's another left; *animam verò unam*; but the soul is one, an only one, and if that be damned, you have not another to be saved.

O therefore be restless till it be, and till you know it be out of eternal danger.

SECT. VI.

Use 3.

IN conclusion, if so many Professours of Religion be cheated in their profession, let all that are well satisfied and assured of their integrity bless the Lord whil'st they live, for that mercy. O 'tis a mercy that no unsanctified soul can have; yea, and it's a mercy that many gracious souls cannot obtain, though they seek it with tears; and would part with all the pleasant things they have in the world to enjoy it.

This is that mercy that gives souls the highest pleasures this world is acquainted with, or the state of this mortality can bear: for let the well assured soul but consider what it is assured of: *Christ* with the purchases of his blood. O

what

what is this! *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine*, Cant. 2. 16. what a vital raviſhing overpowering efficacy is in that voice of faith! Let it but look back a few years, and compare what it was with what it is: it was afar off, it's now made nigh, *Epheſ.* 2. 12, 13. It was not beloved, but is now beloved, *Rom.* 25. 26. it had not obtained mercy, but now hath obtained mercy, 1 *Pet.* 2. 10. or let the aſſured ſoul look forward and compare what it now is, and hath, with what it ſhortly ſhall be made, and put in poſſeſſion of: *Beloved*, (ſaith the Apoſtle) *now are we the Sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be: but we know that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is*, 1 John 3. 2.

I ſay, let the aſſured ſoul but ſteep its thoughts by meditation in theſe ſubjects, and it is as impoſſible to keep him from his tranſports of Joy, as it is for a man to forbear laughing when he is tickled.

O what a life have you in compariſon of other men? Some have two Hells, one preſent, another coming; you have

Two Heavens; one in hand, the other in hope. Some of your own brethren in Christ, that have been it may be many years panting after assurance, are still denyed it; but God hath indulged so peculiar a favour to you. Bless ye the Lord, and make his praise glorious.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Containing the proof and improvement of

Doct. 2.

That true Grace is exceeding precious, and greatly enricheth the ſoul that hath it: it's Chriſts Gold.

SECT. I.

THE *Lord Jeſus* here chooſeth the moſt pure, precious, reſplendent, durable, and valuable thing in all the Treaſuries, and magazines of Nature, to ſhadow forth ſaving grace, which is infinitely more excellent: certainly that muſt be the beſt thing, which the beſt things in Nature can but imperfectly ſhadow forth. What was the golden oyle emptied through the two golden pipes,

Zech.

Zech. 4. 12. but the precious graces of God, flowing through Chriſt, into all his members! Gold is precious, but one *drachm* of ſaving grace is more precious than all the gold of *Ophir*. *It cannot be gotten for gold, neither ſhall ſilver be weighed for the price thereof*, Job 28. 15. Surely *Gold* and *Silver*, *Saphires*, *Diamonds* and *Rubies* are not worth the mentioning, when ſaving grace is once mentioned. For Conſider it,

1. Firſt, In its *cauſe*, and *fountain* from whence it flows; and you ſhall find it to be the fruit of the ſpirit, *Gal.* 5. 22. who upon that accompt is called *the ſpirit of grace*, Heb. 10. 29. It derives its original from the moſt high; it is ſpirit born of ſpirit, *Joh.* 3. 6. all the *rules of Morality*, all humane diligence and induſtry can never produce one gracious habit or act alone, 2 Cor. 3. 5. *Not that we are ſufficient of our ſelves*, &c.

Nay, we ſpeak not becoming the incomparable worth of grace, when we ſay it is the fruit and birth of the ſpirit; for ſo are common gifts alſo. There are ſeveral emanations from this Sun, divers ſtreams from this fountain; but of all his operations and productions, this of ſaving grace

grace is the most noble and excellent. *Gifts* are from the spirit as well as *grace*, but grace is more excellent than the best gifts, 1 Cor. 12. 31. *covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.* Hence you read in Phil. 1. 10. *of things that are excellent*, or as the original, τὰ διαφέροντα might be rendred, *things that differ.* Namely, in respect of excellency, not as good and evil, but as less good, and more good differ. Gifts have their value and preciousness, but the best gifts differ as much from grace, as brass from *gold*; though both be generated by the influence of the same Sun. Gifts (as one saith) are *dead graces*, but graces are *living gifts:* it is the most excellent production of the highest and most excellent cause.

2. Secondly, Consider it in its *nature*, and you will find it *divine*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. *partakers of the divine nature, viz.* in our *sanctification*: not that it gives us the *properties* of the divine nature, they are incommunicable; but the similitude, and resemblance of it is stamped upon our souls, in the work of grace.

The new man is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him, Col. 3. 10. The *Schoolmen* and some of the

Fathers

Fathers place this image or resemblance of God, in the natural faculties of the soul, *viz.* the understanding, memory, and will: which is an *umbrage* of a *Trinity in Unity*: but it rather consists in the *renovation of the faculties* by grace; for in this we bear the divine image upon our souls, and that image or resemblance of God in holiness, is the *beauty*, and *honour* of our souls.

It is their beauty, *How fair, and how pleasant art thou O love for delights!* saith *Christ* of his people, *Cant.* 7. 6. Natural beauty consists in the *Symmetry*, and comely proportion of parts each with other; Spiritual beauty in the harmony or agreeableness of our souls to *God*: and as it is our chiefest beauty, so certainly it is our highest *honour*; for it gives us access unto *God*, who is the fountain of honour and glory; and this makes the righteous *more excellent than his neighbour*; let his neighbour be what he will, though the blood of *Nobles* run in his Veins, the righteous is more excellent than he; except saving grace be also diffused into his soul.

3. Thirdly, Consider it in its *recipient subject*, and you will find its value still

to

to increase: for the *precious* oyle of saving grace is never poured into any other than an *elect vessel.*

Hence faith, one branch of sanctification, is with respect to its *subject*, stiled *the faith of Gods elect*, Tit. 1. 1. Whosoever finds true grace in his soul, may (during the evidence thereof) from it strongly conclude his *election*, looking backward; and his *salvation* looking forward, *Rom.* 8. 30. it *marks* and *seals* the person in whom it is for glory. *God hath set apart him that is godly for himself*, Psal. 4. 3.

4. Fourthly, View the precious worth of grace in its *excellent effects* and influences upon the soul, in which it inheres.

(1.) It *adornes* it with incomparable ornaments, which are of great price in the sight of God, 1 *Pet.* 3. 4. yea it reflects such beams of glory in the soul where its seat is, That Christ himself the *Author*, is also the *Admirer* of it, Cant. 4. 9. *Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart, with one of thine eyes, with one of the chains of thy neck.* And as one overcome with its excelling beauty, he saith, *Turn away thine*

thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me, Cant. 6. 5.

(2.) It *Elevates* and *ennobles* a mans ſpirit beyond all other principles in man. It ſets the heart and affections upon Heaven, and takes them up with the glory of the inviſible world, Phil. 3. 20. *But our converſation is in Heaven, from whence we look for a Saviour.* Whileſt others are trading for corn, and wine; for ſheep, and Oxen; for feathers, and trifles; the gracious ſoul is trading with God for pardon, and peace; for righteouſneſs, and life; for glory and immortality. *Truly our fellowſhip is with the father, and with his Son Chriſt Jeſus*, 1 Joh. 1. 3.

(3.) It doth not only raiſe the ſpirit by converſing with God, and things above; but Transforms the ſoul, by that converſe, into the likeneſs of thoſe heavenly objects it converſeth with. *It changeth them into the ſame image*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. ſo that though the ſanctified man ſtill remains, the *who he was*, yet not the *what he was* before, the very temper of his ſpirit is altered.

(4.) It doth not only *transform* the ſoul in which it is, but *preſerves* the *ſubject* in which it is: it is a ſingular *preſervative*

privative from sin; so that though sin *be* in them still, and *works* in them still; yet it cannot *prevail* in them still, to fulfil the lusts of it, as it was wont to do. *Gal.* 5. 17. Sin conceives, but cannot bring forth fruit unto death; this gives it a miscarrying womb.

(5.) It doth not only preserve it from *sin*, but *Grace establisheth* the soul in whom it is, far beyond any other *Arguments* without; or any other *principles* within a man. *It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace*, Heb. 13. 9. This is that which the *Apostle* calls our own *stedfastness*; or that ballast we have within our selves; which keeps us tite and stable. O the excellencies of grace!

(6.) To conclude, it is the root of all that precious fruit which we bring forth to God in this world. It is the root of every gracious *word* in our *lips*, and of every gracious *work* in our *hands*: be the matter of our gracious thoughts never so excellent, the matter of our heavenly discourses and prayers never so sweet; still grace is the root of the matter; *Job* 19. 28. O then what a precious thing is grace!

5. Fifthly,

5. Fifthly, View it in its *properties*, and you will ſoon diſcover its tranſcendent excellencies: the richeſt *Epithetes* are no *Hyperboles* here, we ſpeak not beyond the value of it, when we call it *ſupernatural grace*, for ſo it is. It comes down from above, from the father of lights; *James* 1. 17. nature can never be improved to that height, how much ſoever its Admirers boaſt of it: nor do we ſtrain too high, when we call it *immortal grace*; for ſo God hath made it: this is that water which ſprings up in the ſanctified ſoul into eternal *life*, *John* 4. 14. It will not dye when thou dyeſt, but aſcend with the ſoul from which it is inſeparable; and be ſwallowed up with it into glory, *Rom.* 8. 10. you may out-live your *friends*, you may out-live your *Eſtates*, you may out-live your *gifts*; but you can't out-live your *graces*.

Shall I ſay it is the moſt *ſweet and comfortable thing* that ever the ſoul was acquainted with in this world, next *Jeſus Chriſt*, the *Author* and fountain of it? Sure if I ſo ſpeak, I have as many witneſſes to atteſt it, as there be gracious ſouls in the world: nothing is more comfortable than grace, except *Chriſt*, and

yet

yet without grace no soul can feel the comforts of Christ, in the *troubles of life*, or in the *straits* of death: this is a spring of comfort.

6. Sixthly, Consider it in its *design*, and *scope*; and you will still discern more and more of its precious excellency: for what is the aime and end of God in the infusions and improvements of grace, but to attemper and mould our spirits by it, into a meetness and fitness for the enjoyment of himself in the world to come? Col. 1. 12. *giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light*: compare this with 2 Cor. 5. 5. *now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God.*

O blessed design! how precious must that work be, which is wrought for so high and glorious a purpose as this is! no work more excellent, no end more noble.

7. Seventhly, Consider the *means* and *instruments* both *principal*, and *subordinate*, imployed in this work: many blessed instruments are set on work to beget, conserve, and improve it in our souls: and these all speak the precious worth of it:

no wise man will dig for a base and worthless metal, with golden mattocks. The *blood* of Christ was shed to procure it, *Heb.* 13. 12.

The *spirit of God* is sent forth to form and create it; for it is his own workmanship, *Ephes.* 2. 10. his fruit, *Gal.* 5. 22.

The *Ordinances* and *Officers* of the Gospel were at first instituted, and ever since continued in the Church, for this works sake, *John* 17. 17. and *Eph.* 4. 12. it's the fruit of Christs blood; yea, and it hath cost the sweat and blood of the dispensers of the Gospel too.

Nay, all the *works of Providence* go this way; and aim at this thing, *Rom.* 8. 28. What is the errand of all Gods rods, but to make us partakers of his holiness? *Heb.* 12. 10.

8. Eighthly, The high value that the most high God sets upon grace, shews it to be an excellent thing indeed: *it is of great price in his sight*, 1 Pet. 3. 4. no service finds acceptation with God, but what is performed by grace: none but sanctified vessels, are meet for the masters use. *The end of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure heart*, 1 Tim. 1. 5.

The

The weakest performances of grace find acceptance with him, though clog'd with many sinful weaknesses and infirmities. *Heb.* 11. 31, 32. if God so prize it, well may we: he that made the *Jewel*, best understands the value of it.

9. Ninthly, *The Hypocritical pretences* made to it all over the professing world, shew what a most precious and desirable thing it is: if there were not some singular glory in it, why doth every one covet to be reputed gracious? nay the *Devil* himself baits many of his hooks of temptation with a shew of grace: for he knows sin hath no native beauty of its own, to entice; and therefore he borrows the paint and pretence of holiness, to cover it: but O what a *dilemma* will the *Hypocrite* be posed with at last? and how can he answer it when God shall demand,

If grace were evil, why didst thou so affect the name and reputation of it? And if it were good, why didst thou satisfie thy self with the empty name and shadow of it only?

10. Tenthly, To conclude; The *incomparable esteem* that all good men have for it, shews it to be a thing of inestimable price.

Grace

Grace is the *sum* of all their *prayers*, the *scope* of all their *endeavours*, the *matter* of their chief *Joy*, the reward of their afflictions and sufferings. Their chief *Joys* and sorrows, hopes and fears in this world, are taken up about it: by all which it appears that its price is above *Rubies*; and all the gold and silver in the world are but dung and dross in comparison with it.

SECT. II.

Containing six practical inferences from this precious truth:

Infer. I.

Is saving grace more precious than gold? *let them that have it bless God for it, and not boast:* mens hearts are as apt to puff up and swell with *spiritual*, as with *material* gold: it's hard to be an owner of much of this *gold*, and not be lifted up with it. To keep down thy heart, and preserve thine eyes from being dazeled with these thy gracious excellencies; it will be needful for thee Christian sometimes to consider,

That

That although Grace be one of the most excellent things that ever God created, yet it is *but a Creature*, a dependent thing, 1 *Cor.* 5. 17.

Yea, it is not only a Creature, but a very imperfect creature yet in thy soul; labouring under many weaknesses, *Phil.* 3. 12. and sometimes ready to dye, *Rev.* 3. 2.

Though it can do many things for you, yet it cannot Justifie you before God: you cannot make a garment of it to cover your guilt, nor plead the dignity of it at Gods bar for your discharge; 'tis not your *inherent*, but Christs *imputed righteousness* must do that for you; though in other respects it be very necessary.

Nay, remember; how excellent soever it be, it's not the native growth and product of your hearts; all the grace you have is foraign to your Natures; and what you have, is received, 1 *Cor.* 4. 7.

And lastly, remember he that is most proud and conceited of his own graces, will be found to be the owner of least grace, and hath most cause to question whether he have any or no. It's the nature of grace to humble, abase, and empty the soul; and it's the strength of our

our Corruptions which thus puffs us up with vain conceits.

Infer. 2.

Is saving grace more excellent than gold? *what cause then have the poorest Christians to be well satisfied with their lot?* To others God hath given *Ishmaels* portion, the fatness of the *earth*; to you *Isaacs*, the graces of the Covenant: their portion is paid in *brass*, yours in *gold*: many of you are *poor in the world*, but *rich in faith*; *and heirs of the Kingdom which God hath promised*, Jam. 2. 5. what is the *dust* of the *earth*, to the *fruits* of the *spirit*? you are troubled that you have no more of the world; it may be if you had more *gold*, you would have less *grace*: you consider not how many are poor and wretched in both worlds; *moneyless*, and *Christless* too: you don't consider you are near come to that state, in which all your wants will be fully supplyed; where you shall not need the treasures of the earth, and have your desires satisfied out of the treasures of grace and glory.

Infer. 3.

Infer. 3.

Is saving grace *gold*, yea infinitely more precious than gold? *then surely declining Christians are great losers, and have cause to be great mourners.* The remission of the least degree of *grace*, is more to be lamented than the loss of the greatest summ of *gold.*

Though the habits of grace be not lost; yet the *Acts* of grace may be suspended, 2 *Sam.* 12. 31. The *degrees* of grace may be *remitted*, *Rev.* 3. 3. The *evidences* of grace may be *clouded*, and *consequently* the *Comforts* of grace may be *suspended*, Isa. 50. 10. and the least of these is such a loss, as all the treasures of the earth cannot repair: well therefore may declined Christians challenge the first place among all the mourners in the world.

Infer. 4.

Is grace so invaluably precious? *how precious then ought the ordinances of God to be to our souls, by which grace is first communicated, and afterwards improved in our souls! The law of thy mouth is better unto me*

than thousands of gold and silver, Psal. 119. 72. and good reason, whilest it *imparts*, and *improves* that to which gold and silver is but dross and dung.

None but those that value not grace, will ever slight the *means*, or despise and injure the *instruments* thereof. It's a sad sign of a graceless world, when these precious things fall under contempts and slights.

Infer. 5.

If grace be so precious, *how watchful should all gracious persons be in the dayes of temptation*! the design of temptation is to rob you of your treasure: when *Cut-purses* get into the croud, we use to say; Friends, look to your purses. How many brave Christians have we read and heard of, that have rather chosen to part with their *lives*, than with their *graces*, who have *resisted unto blood, striving against sin*? Heb. 12. 4.

O Christians, you live in a cheating age, many *seeming* Christians have lost *all*, and many *real* Christians have lost *much*, so much, that they are like to see but little comfort in this world: who are like to go mourning to the grave with that La-

Lamentation, Job 29. 2, 3. *O that it were with me as in times past!*

Infer. 6.

To Conclude, is there such precious worth in saving grace? *then bless God for, and diligently use all means to increase and improve it in your souls.* It's gold for preciousness, and for usefulness; and must not be laid up in a Napkin: that's a sin condemned by the very scope of that *Parable, Matth.* 25. 14, 15, &c.

All Christians indeed have not the same advantages of improvement, but all must improve it according to the advantages they have, in order to an account. *Reserved Christians* who live too abstracted from the Society and Communion of others, and disperse not their streams abroad to the benefit of others; nor improve the graces of others for their own benefit, are wanting both to their own duty, and Comfort. See you a man rich in *grace*; O trade with him if you can, to improve your selves by him; and the rather, because you know not how soon death may snatch him from you, and with him all his stock of grace is gone

from you too, except what you made your own whileſt you converſed with him: but alas, alas! inſtead of *holy* profitable ſoul-improving communion, ſome are ſullenly reſerved; ſome are negligent and lazy; ſome are litigious and wrangling; more apt to draw forth the droſs, than the gold; I mean the corruptions, than graces of others. And how few there be that drive a profitable trade for increaſe of grace, is ſad to conſider.

And as grace is not improved by communion with *men*, ſo I doubt moſt Chriſtians thrive but little in their communion with *God*: we are too ſeldom in our *cloſets*, too little upon our *knees*, and when we are there, we gain but little, we come not off ſuch gainers by duty as we might. O Chriſtians, think when you are hearing, and praying, I am now trading with Heaven for that which is infinitely better than gold. God is rich to all that call upon him, what a treaſure may I get this hour, if the fault be not in my own heart? And thus of the ſecond obſervation.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Wherein the third Doctrine, being the main subject of this Treatise is opened, and the method of the whole discourse stated.

Doct. 3.

That only is to be accounted true grace which is able to endure all those tryals appointed or permitted for the discovery of it.

SECT. I.

THE most wise God hath seen it fit to set all his people in a state of tryal in this world. First, he *tryes*, and then he *Crowns* them. James 1. 12. *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation,* δοκιμὸν, (i. e.) probation or tryal] *for when he is tryed, he shall receive the crown of life,* &c.

No man can ſay what he is, whether his graces be true or falſe, till they be tryed and examined by thoſe things which are to them as fire is to gold. Theſe ſelf-deceivers in the *Text*, thought they had grace; yea they thought they had been rich in grace; but it proved no better than *droſs*: and therefore *Chriſt* here counſels them to *buy of him gold tryed in the fire*, (i. e.) true grace indeed, which appears to be ſo upon the various proofs and examinations of its ſincerity which are to be made in this world, as well as in the great ſolemn tryal it muſt come to in the world to come.

The Scriptures ſpeak of a twofold tryal, *viz.*

A tryal of mens { Opinions and Graces.

1. Firſt, The *opinions* and Judgements of men are tryed as by fire, in which ſenſe we are to underſtand that place, 1 Cor. 3. 12, 13. *Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, ſilver, precious ſtones; wood, hay, ſtubble: every mans work ſhall be made manifeſt, for the day*

day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every mans work of what sort it is.

This *text* speaks of such persons as hold the foundation of Christianity, but yet superstructed such doctrines and practices, as were no more able to endure the Tryal, than *hay*, *wood*, or *stubble* can endure the fire. Such a person hereby brings himself into danger, and though the *Apostle* will not deny the *possibility*, yet he asserts the *difficulty* of his salvation: *he shall be saved, yet so as by fire, (i. e.)* as a man is saved by leaping out of his house at midnight when it is all on fire about his ears: for so that phrase imports, *Amos* 4. 11. and *Jude* 23. glad to escape naked, and with the loss of his goods, blessing God he hath his life for a prey: as little regard shall such have to their erroneous notions, and unscriptural opinions at last.

Dum probantur toti in fumum abeunt.

Quo ex judicio velut ex incendio nudus effugit. Chrysost.

2. Secondly, The *graces* of men are brought to the test as well as their opinions. Tryal will be made of their *hearts*,

as well as of their *heads*; and upon this tryal the everlaſting ſafety and happineſs of the perſon depends: if a mans opinions be ſome of them found hay or ſtubble, yet ſo long as he holds the head, and is right in the foundation, he may be ſaved; but if a mans ſuppoſed graces be found ſo, all the world cannot ſave him: there is no way of eſcape if he finally deceive himſelf herein: and of this tryal of *Graces* my text ſpeaks: Sincere Grace is Gold tryed by fire.

There is a twofold tryal of grace, Active, and Paſſive.

Firſt, an *Active* tryal of it, in which we try it our ſelves, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Examine your ſelves, prove your ſelves:* (i. e.) meaſure your *hearts*, *duties* and *graces* by the rule of the word; ſee how they anſwer to that rule, bring your hearts and the word together by ſolemn ſelf-examination: confer with your reins, and commune with your own hearts.

Secondly, A *Paſſive* tryal of it: whether we try it or no, God will try it, he will bring our gold to the touchſtone, and to the fire. *Thou O Lord knoweſt me, thou haſt ſeen me and tryed mine heart towards thee*, ſaith the Prophet, *Jer.* 12. 3.

Sometimes

Sometimes he tryes the *ſtrength* and *ability* of his ſervants graces, and thus he tryed *Abraham*, *Heb.* 11. 17. and ſometimes he tryes the *ſoundneſs* and *ſincerity* of our graces: ſo the *Epheſian Angel* was tryed, and found droſs, *Rev.* 2. 2. And ſo *Job* was tryed and found true gold, *Job* 23. 10. Theſe tryals are not made by God for his own information, for he knows what is in man, his eyes pierce his heart and reins; but for our information, which is the true ſenſe of Deut. 8. 2. *Thou ſhalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee theſe forty years in the wilderneſs, to humble thee; and to prove thee; to know what was in thy heart,* (i. e.) to make thee know it, by giving thee ſuch experiments and tryals of it in thoſe wilderneſs ſtraits and difficulties.

And theſe are the tryals of grace I am here to ſpeak of, not excluding the *Active tryals* made by our ſelves; no, no, all theſe tryals made by God upon us are deſigned to put us upon the tryal of our ſelves: when God tryes, we ſhould try too.

Now the method into which I ſhall caſt this diſcourſe, ſhall be to ſhew you,

1. Firſt, What thoſe things are which try the ſincerity of our graces, as fire tryes gold.

2. Secondly, For what ends doth God put the graces of his people upon ſuch tryals in this world.

3. Thirdly, That ſuch grace only is ſincere as can endure theſe tryals.

4. Fourthly and Laſtly, To apply the whole, in the main uſes of it.

SECT. II.

1. Firſt, *WHAT thoſe things are which try the ſincerity of grace, as fire tryes gold.*

Before I enter into particulars, it will be needful to acquaint you, that the ſubject before me is full of difficulties. There is need (as one ſpeaks) of much cautious reſpect to the various ſizes and degrees of growth among Chriſtians, and the viciſſitudes of their inward caſe: elſe we may darken and perplex the way, inſtead of clearing it.

The *pourtraicture* of a Chriſtian is ſuch as none can draw to one *Model*, but with reſpect to the *infancy* of ſome, as well as the age and *ſtrength* of others.

Great

Great heed also ought to be had in the application of *marks* and *signs*, we should first try them, before we try *our selves*, or *others* by them. *Marks* and *signs* are by some distinguished into *exclusive*, *inclusive*, and *positive*: *exclusive marks* serve to shut out bold pretenders, by shewing them how far they come short of a saving work of grace, and they are commonly taken from some necessary common duty, as hearing, praying, *&c.* he that doth not these things, cannot have any work of grace in him; and yet if he do them, he cannot from thence conclude his estate to be gracious: he that so concludes deceives himself.

Inclusive Marks rather discover the *degrees*, than the truth of grace, and are rather intended for *comfort*, than for *conviction*: if we find them in our selves, we do not only find *sincerity*, but *eminency* of grace: they being taken from some raised degree and eminent acts of grace in confirmed and grown Christians.

Betwixt the two former there is a middle sort of *marks*, which are called *positive marks*, and they are such as are always and only found in regenerate souls. The *Hypocrite* hath them not, *the grown Christian*

ſtian hath them, and that in an eminent degree, the *pooreſt Chriſtian* hath them in a lower but ſaving degree: great care muſt be taken in the application of them: and it's paſt doubt that many weak and injudicious Chriſtians have been greatly prejudiced by finding the experiences of eminent Chriſtians propoſed as rules to meaſure their ſincerity by. Alas! theſe no more fit their *ſouls*, than *Sauls* Armour did *Davids body*.

Theſe things being premiſed, and a due care carried along with us through this diſcourſe; I ſhall next come to the particulars, and ſhew you what thoſe things are which diſcover the ſtate and tempers of our ſouls. And though it be true, that there is no condition we are in, no providence that befalls us, but it takes ſome proof, and makes ſome diſcovery of our hearts: yet to limit this diſcourſe, and fall into particulars as ſoon as we can, I ſhall ſhew what *Tryals* are made of our graces in this world, by our *proſperity*, and our *adverſity*, by our *corruptions* and our *duties*: and laſtly by our *ſufferings* upon the ſcore and account of Religion.

SECT.

SECT. III.

First, *Proſperity*, Succeſs, and the increaſe of outward enjoyments are to grace what fire is to gold. Riches and honours make tryal what we are, and by theſe things many a falſe heart hath been detected, as well as the ſincerity and eminency of others graces diſcovered: we may fancy the fire of proſperity to be rather for *comfort* than *tryal*; to *refreſh* us rather than to *prove* us; but you will find proſperity to be a great *diſcovery*; and that ſcarce any thing proves the truth and ſtrength of mens graces, and corruptions more than it doth: *Rara virtus eſt humilitas honorata*, ſaith *Bernard*, to find humility with honour is to find a *Phœnix*; let an obſcure perſon be lifted up to honour, and how ſteady and well-compoſed ſoever he was before, it's a thouſand to one but his eyes will dazle and his head run round when he is upon the lofty pinacle of praiſe and honour: Prov. 27. 21. *As the fining pot for ſilver, and the furnace for gold; ſo is a man to his praiſe*: put the beſt gold into

Magiſtratus indicat virum.

into the *fining pot* of praiſe, and it's a great wonder if a great deal of droſs do not appear. *Iſa.* 39. 2. the vain glory of good *Hezekiah* roſe like a *froth* or ſcum upon the *pot*, when heated by proſperity. It was ſuch a fining pot to *Herod* as diſcovered him to be droſs it ſelf, *Acts* 12. 23. How did that poor worm ſwell under that tryal into the conceit of a God? and was juſtly deſtroyed by *worms*, becauſe he forgat himſelf to be one: we little think what a ſtrange alteration an exalted eſtate will make upon our ſpirits. When the *Prophet* would abate the vain confidence of *Hazael* who could not believe that ever he ſhould be turned into ſuch a ſalvage beaſt as the *Prophet* had foretold: he only tells him, *The Lord hath ſhewed me that thou ſhalt be King over* Syria, 2 *King.* 8. 13. The meaning is, don't be too confident *Hazael*, that thy temper and diſpoſition can never alter to that degree, Thou never yet ſateſt in a *Throne*; when men ſee the *Crown* upon thy *head*, then they will better ſee the true temper of thy *heart*.

How humble was *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſs, tame and tractable in a lean paſture; but bring them once into *Canaan*, and the world

world is ſtrangely altered; then, *we are Lords*, ſay they, *we will come no more unto thee*, Jer. 2. 2, 7, 31. Proſperity is a *Criſis* both to grace and corruption. Thence is that caution to *Iſrael*, Deut. 10. 11, 12. *When thou haſt eaten, and art full, Then beware leſt thou forget the Lord thy God.* Then beware, that's the Critical time; ſurely that man muſt be acknowledged rich, very rich in grace, whoſe grace ſuffers no diminution or eclipſe by his riches; and that man deſerves double honour, whoſe pride the honours of this world cannot provoke and inflame.

It was a ſad truth from the lips of a pious divine in *Germany* upon his death-bed; being ſomewhat diſconſolate by reflecting upon the barrenneſs of his life: ſome friends took thence an occaſion to commend him, and mind him of his painful Miniſtry, and fruitful life among them; but he cryed out, *auferte ignem, adhuc enim paleas habeo*; *withdraw the fire, for I have chaff in me*; meaning that he felt his ambition like chaff catching fire from the ſparkles of their praiſes: like unto which was the ſaying of another, He that praiſeth me, wounds me.

But

But to descend into the particular discoveries that prosperity and honour make of the *want* of grace in some, and of the *weakness* of grace in others; I will shew you what *symptomes* of Hypocrisie appear upon some men under the Tryals of prosperity, and what signs of grace appear in others under the same tryal.

SECT. IV.

PRosperity discovers many sad symptomes of a naughty heart, and among others these are ordinarily most conspicuous.

1. First, It casts the hearts of some men into a *deep oblivion of God*, and makes them lay aside all care of duty: *rarè fumant fœlicibus Aræ.* The Altars of rich men seldom smoke. *Deut.* 32. 13, 14, 15. *Jesurun* sucked honey out of the rock, eat the fat of Lambs, and kidneys of wheat; but what was the effect of this? he kicked, and forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation; instead of lifting up their *hearts* in an humble thankful acknowledgment of Gods bounty, they lifted up the *heel* in a wanton abuse of his mercy: in the fattest

fatteſt earth we find the moſt ſlippery footing.

He that is truly gracious may in proſperity remit ſome degrees, but a Carnal heart there loſeth all that which in a low condition he ſeemed to have. *Agurs deprecation* as to himſelf, no doubt was built upon his frequent obſervation how it was with others, Prov. 30. 8, 9. *Leſt I be full, and deny God.* It's ſaid in Eccleſ. 5. 12. *That the abundance of the rich will not ſuffer him to ſleep*, and I wiſh that were the worſt injury it did him; but alas, it will not ſuffer him to *pray*, to *meditate*, to allow time and thoughts about his eternal concernments; he falls aſleep in the lap of proſperity, and forgets that there is a *God* to be *ſerved*, or a ſoul to be *ſaved*. O this is a dangerous ſymptome of a very graceleſs heart.

2. Secondly, *Proſperity* meeting with a graceleſs heart, makes it wholly *ſenſual*, and entirely ſwallows up its thoughts and affections: Earthly things tranſform and mold their hearts into their own ſimilitude and nature: the whole ſtrength of their ſouls goes out to thoſe enjoyments. So thoſe graceleſs, yet proſperous perſons are deſcribed,

Job

Job 21. 11, 12, 13. *They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ; they ſpend their dayes in wealth*; they take the *Timbrel*, not the *Bible*. *They rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ*, not a word of their rejoycing in God. *They ſend forth their little ones in the dance.* That is all the *Catechiſm* they are taught. *They ſpend their dayes in wealth.* Their whole time, that precious ſtock and Talent is wholly laid out upon theſe ſenſitive things: either the pleaſure of it powerfully charms them, or the cares of it wholly engroſs their minds; that there is no time to ſpare for God, *They live in pleaſure upon earth*, as it is *James* 5. 5. Juſt as the fiſh lives in the water its proper element: take him off from theſe things, and put him upon ſpiritual ſerious heavenly imployments, and he is *Piſcis in arido.* Like a fiſh upon the dry land.

Now though proſperity may too much influence, and enſnare the minds of good men, and eſtrange them too much from Heavenly things; yet thus to engroſs their hearts, and convert them into their own ſimilitude and nature, ſo that theſe things ſhould be the Centre of their hearts,

hearts, the very proper element in which they live, is utterly impossible.

An Hypocrite indeed may be brought to this, because though *Janus* like he have two faces, yet he really hath but one principle; and that is wholly carnal and earthly: so that it's easie to make all the water to run in one chanel, to gather all into one entire stream in which his heart shall pour out all its strength to the Creature.

But a Christian indeed hath a double principle that acts him: though he have a law of sin, that moves him one way, yet there is in him also the Law of grace, which thwarts and crosses that principle of corruption; so that as grace cannot do what it would, because of sin; so neither can sin do what it would, because of grace, *Gal.* 5. 17.

The heart of a Christian in the midst of ensnaring sensitive enjoyments finds indeed a corrupt principle in it, which would incline him to fall asleep upon such a soft pillow; and forget God and duty: but it cannot; Oh no, it cannot do so, there's a principle of grace within him that never leaves jogging, disturbing,

ing, and calling upon him, till he rise and return to his God the true rest of his soul.

3. Thirdly, A false pretender to Religion, an *Hypocritical Professour* meeting with prosperity and success, grows altogether unconcerned about the interest of Religion, and senseless of the calamities of Gods people. Thus the Prophet convinces the Jews of their *hypocrisie*, Amos 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *They were at ease in Zion, and trusted in the Mountain of Samaria*; and so having a shadow of Religion, and a fulness of all earthly things, they fell to feasting and sporting: *they drank wine in bowles, and anointed themselves with the chief oyntment, but were not grieved for the affliction of* Joseph: they condoled not *Gnalsheber* over the breakings or teaming to pieces of *Joseph*; they are out of danger once, let the Church shift for it self; they are secure in a warm nest, let the birds of prey catch and devour that flock with which they sometimes associated, they are not toucht with it. *Moses* could not do so though in the greatest security, and confluence of the honours and pleasures of *Egypt*, Acts 7. 23. *Nehemiah* could not do so, though

though the ſervant and *favourite* of a mighty *Monarch*, and wanted nothing to make him outwardly happy: Yet the pleaſures of a *Kings Court* could not cheer his heart, or ſcatter the clouds of ſorrow from his Countenance, whileſt his brethren were in affliction, and the City of his God lay waſte, *Nehem.* 2. 1, 2, 3. nor indeed can any gracious heart be unconcerned and ſenſeleſs; for that Union that all the *Saints* have with *Chriſt* their head, and with one another as fellow members in Chriſt, will beget *ſympathy* among them in their ſufferings, 1 *Cor.* 12. 26.

SECT. V.

BUT as the fire of proſperity diſcovers this, and much more droſs in a graceleſs heart; ſo it diſcovers the ſincerity and grace of Gods people. I ſay not that it diſcovers nothing but grace in them. O that it did not! alas! many of them have had a great deal of droſs and corruption diſcovered by it, as was noted before: but yet in this Tryal, the graciouſneſs and uprightneſs of their hearts

hearts will appear in these and such like workings of it.

1. First, Under prosperity, success and honour, the upright heart will labour to suppress pride, and keep it self lowly and humble, and still the more grace there is, the more humility there will be. If God lift him up, he will lay himself low, and exalt his God high. So did *Jacob* when God had raised and enlarged him, Gen. 32. 10. *I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant, for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.*

Great was the difference in *Jacobs* outward condition at his return, from what it was at his first passage over *Jordan*: then poor, now rich; then single and comfortless, now the head of a great family. Yea, but though his outward estate was altered, the frame of his heart was not altered. *Jacob* was an holy and humble man when he went out, and so he was when he returned: he saw a multitude of mercies about him, and among them all, not one but was greater than himself.

I dare not say every Christian under prosperity can at all times manifest like humility

humility; but I am ſure what pride and vanity ſoever may riſe in a gracious heart tryed by proſperity, there's that within him, will give check to it: he dare not ſuffer ſuch proud thoughts to lodge quietly in his heart: for alas he ſees that in himſelf, and that in his God that will abaſe him; grace will make him *look back* to his original condition, and ſay with *David, What am I O Lord God, and what is my fathers houſe; that thou haſt brought me hitherto?* 2 Sam. 7. 18.

It will make him look in, and ſee the baſeneſs of his own heart, and the Corruptions that are there, and admire at the Dealings of God with ſo vile a Creature. O thinks he, if others did but know what I know of my ſelf, they would abhor me more than now they eſteem and value me.

2. Secondly, *Proſperity* uſually draws forth the Saints love to the God of their mercies: that which heats a wicked mans *luſts*, warms a gracious mans *heart* with love and delight in God.

Theſe were the words of that lovely ſong which *David* ſang in the day that the Lord delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of *Saul*, and

and he said, *I will love thee O Lord my strength*; *Psalm* 18. *Title and v.* 1. *compared*: these outward things are not the main grounds and motives of their love to God; no, no, they love him when he takes away, as well as when he gives: but they are sanctified instruments to inflame their love to God: they *boyle* up a wicked mans *lusts*, but they *melt* a gracious mans soul. O in what a pang of love did *David* go into the presence of God under the sense of his mercies? *his melting mercies*; when he thus poured out his whole soul in a stream of love to his God, 2 Sam. 7. 19, 20. *Is this the manner of men, O Lord God! and what can David say more unto thee*! an expression that turns up the very bottom of his heart.

3. Thirdly, *Prosperity* and comfortable providences do usually become *cautions* against sin when they meet with a sanctified soul. This is the natural inference of a gracious soul from them, Hath God pleased me, then hath he obliged me to take more care to please him. O let me not grieve him, that hath comforted me. So Ezra 9. 13. *After such a deliverance, as this, should we again break thy Commandments*! what! break his Command-

ments

ments who hath broken our bonds! God forbid.

It was an excellent reſolution of a *Chriſtian* once, who receiving an eminent mercy, at the ſame time he felt himſelf under the power of a ſpecial Corruption; Well, (ſaith he) now will I go forth in the ſtrength of this mercy to mortifie and ſubdue that Corruption. I will not meaſure every Chriſtian by the eminent workings of grace in ſome one; but ſurely ſo far I may ſafely go, That ſincerity knows not how to ſin, becauſe grace hath abounded; any more than it dare ſin, that grace may abound.

4. Fourthly, A truly gracious ſoul will not be ſatisfied with all the proſperity and comforts in the world for his portion. *Not thine Lord, but thee* is the voice of grace: when providence had been more than ordinarily bountiful in outward things to *Luther*, he began to be afraid of its meaning, and earneſtly proteſted, God ſhould not put him off ſo. *The Lord is my portion, ſaith my ſoul*, Lam. 3. 2, 4. and the ſoul can beſt tell what it hath made its choice, and whereon it hath beſtowed its chief delights and expectations.

An unsound heart will accept these for its portion: if the world be sure to him, and his designs fail not there; he can be content to leave God, and soul, and heaven, and hell at hazard: but so cannot the upright. These things in *subordination*; but neither these, nor any thing under the Sun in *Comparison* with, or *opposition* to God.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Shewing what probation Adverſity makes of the ſincerity or unſoundneſs of our hearts.

SECT. I.

THat *adverſity* is a *furnace* to try of what metal our hearts are, none can doubt, that hath either ſtudied the Scriptures, or obſerved his own heart under afflictions.

When the droſs and ruſt of Hypocriſie and Corruption had almoſt eaten out the heart of Religion among the *Jews*; then ſaith God, *I will melt them, and try them; for what ſhall I do for the daughter of my people?* Jer. 9. 7. here affliction is the Furnace, and the people are the metal caſt into it; and the end of it is Tryal. I will melt them and try them; what other courſe ſhall I take with them? If I let them alone, their Luſts like the

ruſt and Canker in metals will eat them out. Proſperity multiplyes Profeſſours, and adverſity brings them to the teſt: then *Hirelings* quickly become *changelings*: the gilded *potſhard* gliſters till it come to ſcouring. The Devil thought *Job* had been ſuch a one, and moves that he may be tryed this way; being confident he would be found but droſs in the tryal, *Job* 1. 11. But though the Furnace of affliction diſcovered ſome droſs in him, (as it will in the beſt of men) yet he came forth as gold.

In this Furnace alſo grace is manifeſted: 'tis ſaid, Rev. 13. 10. *Here is the patience and faith of the Saints*: (i. e.) here is the tryal and diſcovery of it in theſe dayes of adverſity. It was a weighty ſaying of *Tertullian* to the perſecutors of the Church in his dayes, *probatio innocentiæ noſtræ, eſt iniquitas veſtra.* Your wickedneſs is the tryal of our innocency. *Conſtantius* the Father of *Conſtantine* made an exploratory decree, that all who would not renounce the Chriſtian faith ſhould loſe their places of honour and profit; This preſently ſeparated the *droſs* from the *gold*; which

Tertul. in Apol.

was

was his deſign: for many renounced Chriſtianity, and thereupon were renounced by him; and thoſe that held their integrity, were received into favour.

In time of proſperity hypocriſie lyes covered in the heart like *neſts* in the green *buſhes*; but when the *Winter* of adverſity hath made them bare, every body may ſee them without ſearching.

But to fall into cloſer particulars, it will be neceſſary to enquire what effects of adverſity are common to both the ſound, and the unſound; and then what are proper to either in this cloſe tryal by Adverſity.

SECT. II.

IT will be expedient to the deſign I manage in this diſcourſe, to ſhew in the firſt place what are common effects of adverſity to both the godly and ungodly, for in ſome things they differ not, but as it is with the one, ſo alſo with the other: as,

1. Firſt, Both the godly and ungodly may fear adverſity before it comes. To be ſure a wicked man cannot, and it's evident many godly men do not come up to the height of that rule, James 1. 2. *To account it all Joy when they fall into divers temptations*, or tryals by adverſity.

'Tis ſaid, Iſaiah 33. 14 *The ſinners in Sion are afraid, trembling ſurprizeth the Hypocrite.* Namely, under the apprehenſion of approaching calamities: and it's true alſo, the *Saints in Sion* may be afraid: *my fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgements*; ſaid holy *David*, Pſal. 119. 120. and Job 3. 23. *The thing which I greatly feared* (ſaith that upright ſoul) *is come upon me*: there is a vaſt

vaſt difference betwixt a Saints firſt meeting with afflictions, and his parting with them: he entertains them ſometimes with trembling, he parts with them rejoycing, ſmiling on them, and bleſſing them in the name of the Lord. So that by this the upright, and the falſe heart, are not diſcriminated: even ſanctified nature declines ſufferings and troubles.

2. Secondly, Both the godly and ungodly may entertain afflictions with regret and unwillingneſs when they come: afflictions and troubles are wormwood and gall, *Lam.* 3. 19. and that goes not down pleaſantly with fleſh and blood. Heb. 12. 11. *No affliction for the preſent ſeemeth joyous, but grievous*; he means to Gods own people. They are *in heavineſs* through manifold temptations or tryals by the rod: 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. When God gives the cup of affliction into the hands of the wicked, how do they reluctate and loath it? how do their ſtomachs riſe at it? and though the portion of the Saints cup be much ſweeter than theirs, (for that bitter ingredient of Gods vindictive wrath is not in it) yet even they ſhrink from it, and loth they are to taſte it.

3. Thirdly, Both the one and other may be impatient and fretful in adverſity: it's the very nature of fleſh and blood to be ſo. *The wicked are like the troubled ſea which cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt forth mire and dirt*, Iſa. 57. 20. It's an alluſion to the unſtable and ſtormy *Ocean*: You know there is naturally an eſtuation, and working in the Sea, whether it be incenſed by the wind or no; but if a violent wind blow upon the unquiet *Ocean*, Oh what raging and foaming is there! what abundance of traſh and filth doth it at ſuch times caſt out!

Now, though grace make a great difference betwixt one and another, yet I dare not ſay, but even a gracious heart may be very unquiet and tumultuous in the day of affliction. Sanctified ſouls have their paſſions and Luſts which are too little mortified, even as *ſweet bryar*, and *holy Thiſtles* have their prickles, as well as the worthleſs bramble. *Jonah* was a good man, yet his ſoul was ſadly diſtempered by adverſe providences: *Jonah* 4. 9. *Yea* (ſaith he, and that to his God) *I do well to be angry, even unto death.*

4. Fourthly, Both the one and the other may be weary of the rod, and think the

the day of adverſity a tedious day, wiſhing it were once at an end. *Babylon* ſhall be weary of the evil that God will bring upon it, *Jer.* 51. *ult.* and oh that none of *Sions Children* were weary of adverſity too! How ſad a moan doth *Job* make of his long continued affliction, Job 16. 6, 7. *though I ſpeak, my grief is not aſſwaged, and though I forbear, what am I eaſed? but now he hath made me weary.*

And if you look into *Pſal.* 6. 3, 6. you may ſee another ſtrong Chriſtian even tyred in the way of affliction: *My ſoul* (ſaith *David* in that place) *is ſore vexed, but thou O Lord how long! I am weary with my groaning.*

5. Fifthly, Both the one and other may be driven to their knees by adverſity. *Lord in trouble have they viſited thee, they have poured out a prayer when thy chaſtening was upon them,* Iſa. 26. 16. Not that a godly perſon will pray no longer than the rod is at his back; O no, he cannot live without prayer long, how few calls ſoever he hath to that duty by the rod: but when the rod is on his *back*, he will be more frequently, and more fervently upon his *knees*: indeed many graceleſs hearts are like *Childrens Tops* which will

go

go no longer than they are whipt; they cannot find their knees and their tongues, till God find a rod to excite them. A dangerous *symptome.* The same affliction may put a gracious, and a graceless soul to their knees; but though in the external matter of duty, and in the external call or occasion of duty they seem to agree; yet is there a vast difference in the principles, manner, and ends of these their duties; as will evidently appear in its proper place in our following discourse.

But by what hath been said in this *Section* you may see how in some things the holy upright soul acts too like the unsanctified, and in other things how much the *Hypocrite* may act like a Saint: he may be externally humbled, so was *Ahab:* he may pray under the rod, *Mal.* 2. 13. yea and request others to pray for him, so did *Simon,* Acts 8. 24.

SECT.

SECT. III.

BUt though the ſound and unſound heart differ not in ſome external carriages under the rod; yet there are effects of adverſity which are proper to either, and will diſcriminate them. To which end let us firſt ſee what effects adverſity is uſually followed withall in unſound and carnal hearts: and we ſhall find among other theſe *five ſymptomes* of a naughty heart appearing under croſſes and afflictions.

1. Firſt, A Graceleſs heart is not quickly and eaſily brought to ſee the hand of God in thoſe troubles that befall it, and be duly affected with it. Iſa. 26. 11. *Lord when thy hand is lifted up they will not ſee:* when it hath ſmitten, or is liſted up to ſmite, they ſhut their eyes: 'tis the malice of this man, or the negligence of that, or the unfaithfulneſs of another that hath brought all this trouble upon me; thus the Creature is the *Horizon*, that terminates their ſight, and beyond that they uſually ſee nothing: ſometimes indeed the hand of God is ſo immediately manifeſted, and convincingly diſcovered in

in afflictions, that they cannot avoid the ſight of it, and then they may (in their way) pour out a prayer before him, but ordinarily they impute all to ſecond cauſes, and overlook the firſt cauſe of their troubles.

2. Secondly, Nor is it uſual with theſe men under the rod to retire into their cloſets, and ſearch their hearts there; to find out the particular cauſe and provocation of their affliction: *No man repented him of his wickedneſs, ſaying what have I done?* Jer. 8. 6. what curſed thing is there with me, that hath thus incenſed the anger of God againſt me? God viſits their iniquities with *afflictions*, but they viſit not their own hearts by ſelf-*examinations*. God judges them, but they judge not themſelves; he ſhews their iniquities in a clear glaſs, but none ſaith, *What have I done?* This phraſe, *What have I done?* is the voice of one that recollects himſelf after a raſh action; or the voice of a man aſtoniſhed at the diſcovery afflictions make of his ſins, but no ſuch voice as this is ordinarily heard among carnal men.

3. Thirdly, An unſound profeſſour if left to his choice, would rather chuſe *ſin* than

than *affliction*; and ſees more evil in that, than in this.

And it cannot be doubted if we conſider, the principle by which all unregenerate men are acted is *ſenſe* not *faith*: hence *Jobs* friends would have argued his Hypocriſie, *Job* 36. 21. and had their *application* been as right as their *rule*, it would have concluded it. *This* (*viz.* Sin) *haſt thou choſen, rather than affliction.*

I do not ſay that an upright man cannot commit a *moral* evil, to eſcape a *pœnal* evil. O that daily obſervation did not too plentifully furniſh us with ſad inſtances of that kind! but upright ones do not, dare not upon a ſerious deliberate diſcuſſion and debate chuſe ſin, rather than affliction; what they may do upon ſurpriſals, and in the violence of temptation is of another nature.

But a falſe and unſound heart diſcovers it ſelf in the choice it makes upon deliberation, and that frequently, when ſin and trouble come in competition: put caſe, ſaith *Auguſtine*, a *Ruffian* ſhould with one hand ſet the cup of drunkenneſs to thy mouth, and with the other a dagger to thy breaſt; and ſay *drink* or *dye*: thou

thon ſhouldſt rather chuſe to dye ſober, than to live a *drunkard*: and many Chriſtians have reſiſted unto blood ſtriving againſt ſin, and with renowned *Moſes* choſen affliction, the worſt of afflictions; yea death it ſelf in the moſt formidable appearance, rather than ſin: and it is the habitual temper and reſolution of every gracious heart ſo to do, though thoſe holy reſolutions are ſometimes over-born by violence of temptation.

But the *Hypocrite* dreads leſs the defilement of his ſoul, than the loſs of his eſtate, liberty or life. If you ask upon what ground then doth the Apoſtle ſuppoſe, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. a man may give his body to be burnt, and not have charity? that the *Salamander* of Hypocriſie may live in the flame of *Martyrdom*? The anſwer is at hand, They that chuſe death in the ſenſe of this Text do not chuſe it to eſcape ſin; but to feed and indulge it. Thoſe ſtrange adventures (if any ſuch be) are rather to maintain their own honour, and enrol their names among worthy and famous perſons to poſterity; or out of a blind zeal to their eſpouſed errours and miſtakes; than in a dull regard

gard to the glory of God, and the preſervation of integrity. I fear to ſpeak it, but it muſt be ſpoken; (ſaith *Hierom.*) that even Martyrdom it ſelf, when ſuffered for admiration, and applauſe, profits nothing; but that blood is ſhed in vain.

Timeo dicere, ſed dicendum eſt; martyrium ipſum ſi ideo fiat ut admirationi & laudi habeatur à fratribus; fruſtrà ſanguis effuſus eſt. Hieron.

4. Fourthly, It is the property of an unregenerate ſoul under adverſity to turn from creature to creature for ſupport and comfort, and not from every creature to God alone. So long as their feet can touch ground, I mean feel any creature relief or comfort under them, they can ſubſiſt and live in afflictions; but when they loſe ground, when all creature refuge fails, then their hearts fail too.

Thus *Zedekiah* and the ſelf-deceiving *Jews*, when they ſaw their own ſtrength failed them, and there was little hope left that they ſhould deliver themſelves from the *Chaldeans*, what do they in that ſtrait? do they with upright *Jehoſaphat* ſay, *our eyes are unto thee?* No, no, their eyes were upon *Ægypt* for ſuccour,

not

not upon heaven: Well, *Pharaoh* and his aids are left ſtill, all hope is not gone: *Jer.* 37. 9. See the like in *Ahaz*, in a ſore plunge and diſtreſs he Courts the King of *Aſſyria* for help, 2 *Chron.* 22. 28, 29. That project failing, why then he will try what the Gods of *Damaſcus* can do for him: any way rather than the right way, *Flectere ſi nequeam ſuperos, Acheronta movebo.*

So it is with many others. If one child dye, what do they do, run to God, and comfort themſelves in this, *The Lord liveth* though my child dye? if an Eſtate be loſt and a family ſinking, do they with *David* comfort themſelves in the *everlaſting Covenant*, ordered and ſure? no, no; but if one relation dye, there's another alive; if an eſtate be gone, yet not all: ſomething is left ſtill, and the caſe will mend.

As long as ever ſuch men have any viſible encouragement, they will hang upon it; and not make up all in Chriſt, and encourage themſelves in the Lord. To tell them of rejoycing in the Lord, when the figtree bloſſomes not, is what they cannot underſtand.

5. Fifthly,

5. Fifthly, to conclude, An unſound heart never comes out of the Furnace of affliction purged, mortified, and more ſpiritual and holy than when he was caſt into it: his ſcum and droſs is not there ſeparated from him: nay the more they are afflicted, the worſe commonly they are; *Why ſhould ye be ſmitten any more? ye will revolt more and more*, Iſa. 1. 5. and to keep to our Metaphor, conſult *Jer.* 6. 29. God had put that incorrigible people into the Furnace of affliction, and kept them long in that fire; and what was the Iſſue? why, ſaith the Prophet, *The bellows are burnt, the lead is conſumed of the fire, the founder melteth in vain*, &c. *reprobate ſilver ſhall men call them, becauſe the Lord hath rejected them.*

If the fire of affliction be continually blown till the very bellows be burnt, that is, the *tongue*, or rather the *lungs* of the *Prophet*, which have ſome reſemblance to bellows; though theſe be even ſpent in reproving, and threatning, and denouncing woe upon woe, and Judgement upon Judgement; and God fulfills his word upon them; yet ſtill they are as before; the droſs remains: though

Jeruſalem

Jerusalem be made a *Furnace*, and the inhabitants, the flesh boyling in it over a fierce fire of affliction; yet as it is noted (pertinently to my Discourse) in Ezek. 24. 6. 13. *the scum remains with them*, and cannot be separated by the fire; and the reason is plain, because no affliction in it self purges sin, but as it is sanctified, and works in the vertue of Gods blessing, and in pursuance of the promises.

O think on this you that have had thousands of afflictions in one kind and another, and none of them all have done you good: they have not mortified, humbled, or benefited you at all. And thus you see what the effects of adversity are when it meets a graceless heart.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

BY this time, *Reader*, I ſuppoſe thou art deſirous to know what effects *adverſity* and *afflictions* uſe to have when they meet with an honeſt and ſincere heart; only before I come to particulars, I think it needful to acquaint thee, That the fruits of afflictions are moſtly *after-fruits*, and not ſo diſcernable by the Chriſtian himſelf under the *rod*, as after he hath been exerciſed by it, *Heb.* 12. 11. and calmly reflects upon what is paſt: nor doth every Chriſtian attain the ſame meaſure and degree: ſome *rejoyce*, others commonly *ſubmit*: but I think theſe ſeven effects are ordinarily found in all upright hearts that paſs under the rod.

1. Firſt, The ſincere and upright ſoul betakes it ſelf to God in affliction, *Job* 1. 20. When God was *ſmiting*, *Job* was *praying*: when God *afflicted*, *Job worſhipped*: So *David*, Pſal. 116. 3, 4. *I found ſorrow and trouble, then called I upon the name of the Lord*; and when the meſſenger of *Satan* buffeted *Paul*, *For this cauſe* (ſaith he) *I beſought the Lord thrice*, 2 Cor. 12. 8. Alas, whither ſhould a Child

Child go in diſtreſs but to its Father?

2. Secondly, He ſees, and owns the hand of God in his afflictions; how much or little ſoever of the inſtruments of trouble appear. *The Lord hath taken away*, ſaith *Job*, *Job* 1. 21. God hath bidden him, ſaith *David*, 2 *Sam.* 16. 10. If the blow come from the hand of a wicked man, yet he ſees that wicked hand in Gods righteous hand, *Pſal.* 17. 14. And this apprehenſion is fundamental to all that communion men have with God in their afflictions, and to all that peaceableneſs, and gracious ſubmiſſion of their ſpirits under the rod: he that *ſees* nothing of God in his *troubles*, hath nothing of God in his *ſoul*.

3. Thirdly, He can juſtifie God in all the afflictions and troubles that come upon him, be they never ſo ſevere. *Thou art juſt in all that is brought upon us*, ſaith *Nehemiah*, *Nehem.* 9. 33. *Thou haſt puniſhed us leſs than our iniquities deſerve*, ſaith *Ezra*, *Ezra* 9. 13. *It is of the Lords mercy we are not conſumed*, ſaith the *Church*, *Lam.* 3. 22. Are we in *Babylon*? it's a mercy we are not in *hell*. If God *condemn* him, yet he will *juſtifie* God: if

if God caſt him into a *ſea of trouble*, yet he will acknowledge in all that *ſea of trouble*, there is not one *drop of injuſtice*. If I have not deſerved ſuch uſage from the hands of *men*, yet I have deſerved worſe than this at the hands of *God*.

4. Fourthly, Afflictions uſe to melt and humble gracious hearts: there is an habitual tenderneſs planted in their ſpirits, and a juſt occaſion quickly draws it forth: and ſo uſual a thing it is for gracious hearts to be humbled under the afflictings of God, that *affliction* is upon that ſcore call'd *humiliation*: the *effect* put for the *cauſe*; to ſhew where one is, the other will be: 2 Cor. 12. 21. *My God will humble me*, (i. e.) he will afflict me with the ſight of your ſins, and diſorders: and if a gracious ſoul be ſo apt to be humbled for other mens ſins, much more for his own.

5. Fifthly, The upright ſoul is inquiſitive under the rod to find out that evil for which the Lord contends with him by affliction, Job. 10. 2. *ſhew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me*: and Job 34. 31. *that which I ſee not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.* So Lam. 3. 39, 4. *let us ſearch and try our wayes,*

wayes, and turn again to the Lord: in a flicting God ſearches *them*, and under a fliction they ſearch *themſelves:* willing the are to hear the voice of the rod, an glad of any diſcovery it makes of the hearts.

6. Sixthly, The upright heart chuſe to lye under affliction, rather than to delivered from it by ſin. I ſay this is th choice and reſolution of every upright heart, however it may be ſometimes over born by the violence of temptation, Heb 11.35. *not accepting deliverance, viz.* up on ſinful terms, and conditions.

They are ſenſible how the fleſh ſmart under the rod, but had rather it ſhould ſmart, than conſcience ſhould ſmart under guilt. Affliction ſaith an upright ſou grieves me, but ſin will grieve God; af fliction wounds my fleſh, but ſin will wound my ſoul. Deliverance I long for, but I will not pay ſo dear for it, how much ſoe ver I deſire it. *Nolo tanti emere pœnitenti am*: outward eaſe is ſweet, but inward peace is ſweeter.

7. Seventhly, He prizeth the ſpiritual good gotten by affliction, above delive rance from it; and can bleſs God from his heart for thoſe mercies how dear ſoever

his

his flesh hath paid for them, *Psal.* 119. 67. and 71. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted.* Such is the value the people of God have for spiritual graces, that they cannot think them a dear penyworth, whatever their flesh hath paid for them. The mortification of one Lust, one discovery of sincerity, one manifestation of God to their souls, doth much more than make amends for all that they have endured under the rod.

Is patience improved, self-acquaintance increased, the vanity of the Creature more effectually taught, longings after heaven inflamed? O blessed afflictions that are attended with such blessed fruits! It was the saying of a holy man under a sore trouble for the death of an only Son; when in that dark day God had graciously manifested himself to his soul: O said he, I would be contented (if it were possible) to lay an only Son in the grave every day I have to live in the world, for one such discovery of the love of God as I now enjoy.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Shewing Indwelling ſin to be to grace, what fire is to gold; and how the ſoundneſs and unſoundneſs of our hearts are diſcovered by our Carriage toward it.

SECT. I.

PRoſperity and adverſity put ſincerity to the tryal, but nothing makes a deeper ſearch into our boſomes, nothing ſifts our ſpirits more narrowly, or tells us what our ſtate is more plainly than our behaviour towards that corruption that dwells in us: the thorn is next neighbour to the roſe: ſin and grace dwell not only in the ſame ſoul, but in the ſame faculties. The *Collier* and *Fuller* dwell in one room, what one cleanſeth the other blacks: of all the evils God permits in this world, none is more grievous to his people than this: they

they ſometimes wonder why the Lord will ſuffer it to be ſo; why, ſurely among other wiſe and holy ends of this permiſſion, theſe are ſome.

They are left to try you, and to humble you; there is no intrinſecal goodneſs in ſin, but however in this it occaſions good to us, that by our carriage towards it we diſcern our ſincerity. The touch-ſtone is a worthleſs ſtone in it ſelf, but it ſerves to try the gold: 1 Joh. 3. 9, 10. *Whoſoever is born of God doth not commit ſin, for his ſeed remaineth in him, and he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God; in this the children of God are manifeſt, and the children of the Devil*; *q. d.* in reſpect of their carriage towards ſin, the one and other is plainly manifeſted: this is that which ſeparates the *droſs* from the *gold*, and ſhews you what the true ſtate of mens perſons, and temper of their hearts is. By not *ſinning* we are not to underſtand a total freedom from it in this world, as if it implyed any ſuch perfection of the people of God in this world, that's the *Popiſh* and *Pelagian* ſenſe: nor yet muſt we take it in the *Arminian* ſenſe, who to avoid the argument of the *Orthodox*, will underſtand it

of the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt: what a ſtrange thing would it be to make that a Characteriſtical note of diſtinction betwixt the godly and ungodly, which ſo very few even of the moſt ungodly are ever guilty of?

But the manner of our behaviour towards ſin, and our carriage towards it before, or under, or after the commiſſion of it; in that the children of God are manifeſt, and the children of the Devil.

Now there are five things relating to ſin that diſcriminate and mark the ſtate of the perſons: the difference is diſcernable

In our
1. Abſtinence from ſin.
2. Hatred of ſin.
3. Troubles about ſin.
4. Subjection to ſin.
5. Oppoſition of ſin.

SECT.

SECT. II.

(1.) THe grounds and motives of our abſtinence do very clearly manifeſt the ſtate of our ſouls; what they are in the regenerate, and unregenerate, is our next work. And let it be conſidered

Firſt, That an unſound and unrenewed heart may abſtain from one ſin, becauſe it is contrary to, and inconſiſtent with another ſin: for it is with the ſins of our natures, as it is with the diſeaſes of our bodies: though all diſeaſes be contrary to health, yet ſome diſeaſes (as the Feaver and Palſie) are contrary to each other. So are prodigality and Covetouſneſs, Hypocriſie, and Profaneneſs: theſe oppoſe each other, not for mutual deſtruction as ſin and grace do, but for ſuperiority, each contending for the throne, and ſometimes taking it by turns: it is with ſuch perſons as with that poſſeſſed man, *Matth.* 17. 15. whom the ſpirit caſt ſometimes into the fire, and ſometimes into the water: or if one ſubdue the

other, yet the heart is alſo ſubdued to the vaſſalage of that luſt that is uppermoſt in the ſoul.

2. Secondly, An unrenewed ſoul may be kept from the commiſſion of ſome ſin; not becauſe there is a principle of grace within him, but becauſe of ſome providential reſtraint without him, or upon him: for it often falls out that when men have conceived ſin, and are ready to execute it, providence claps on the fetters of reſtraint, and hinders them from executing it.

This was the caſe of *Abimeleck*, *Gen.* 20. 6. and 17. compared, *I withheld thee:* And though perſons ſo reſtrained, have not the good of ſuch providences, yet others have; for by it a world of miſchief is prevented in the world, which otherwiſe would break out; and to this act of providence we owe our lives, liberties, eſtates and comforts in this world.

3. Thirdly, An unſound heart may not commit ſome ſins; not becauſe he truly hates them, but becauſe his conſtitution inclines him not to them: theſe men are rather beholding to a good temper of body, than to a gracious temper of ſoul. Some men cannot be drunkards if they would;

would ; others cannot be covetous and baſe, they are made *è meliori luto* of a more refined metal than others: but chaſte and liberal, juſt and ſober nature, is but nature ſtill: the beſt nature in all its endowments, is but nature at the beſt.

4. Fourthly, A graceleſs heart may be reſtrained from ſin by the force of education and principles of morality that way inſtilled into it. Thus *Jehoaſh* was reſtrained from ſin, 2 *Kings* 12. 2. and *Jehoaſh did that which was right in the ſight of the Lord all the dayes wherein Jehojadah the Prieſt inſtructed him.* The fear of a Parent, or Maſter will do a great deal more with ſome in this caſe, than the fear of God. The influence of a ſtrict education nips off the excreſcences of budding vice. The way we are taught when *young*, we keep when *old*: this is the influence of man upon man; not the influence of the regenerating ſpirit upon men.

5. Fifthly, A Graceleſs heart may be kept from ſome ſins by the fear of the *events*, both in this world, and that to come. Sin that is followed with infamy and reproach among men, may on this ground be forborn ; not becauſe

God hath *forbidden it*, but becauſe humane laws will *puniſh it*, and the ſober world will brand us for it: and ſome look farther, to the puniſhment of ſin in *hell*: they are not afraid to *ſin*, but they are afraid to *burn*.

Here ſin is like a ſweet *roſe* in a brake of *thorns*: fain we would have it, but are loth to tear our fleſh to come by it. It's good that ſin is prevented any way, but to be kept on this ground from ſin, doth not argue the eſtate of the perſon to be good: and thus you ſee ſome of the grounds on which Carnal men are reſtrained: and in this *the children of the devil are manifeſt*.

SECT. III.

BUt there are grounds of abſtinence from ſin by which *the children of God are alſo manifeſted*, and ſuch are theſe that follow.

1. Firſt, A ſincere heart dares not ſin becauſe of the *eye and fear of God* which is upon him: So you find it in *Job* 31. 1. and 4. he durſt not allow his thoughts to ſin, becauſe he lived under the awe of Gods eye. *Nehemiah* durſt not do as former

former *Governours* had done; though an opportunity presented to enrich himself; *because of the fear of his God*, Nehem. 5. 15. The soul that lives under the awe of this eye will be as conscientious where no discovery can be made by Creatures, as if all the world looked on. Levit. 19. 14. *Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind; but shalt fear thy God. I am the Lord.*

What if a man do curse the *deaf*, the deaf cannot hear him; and what if he do put a stumbling block before the *blind*, the blind cannot see him: true, but God sees him, God hears him, that's enough to a man that hath the fear of the Lord upon his heart.

2. Secondly, As the fear of God, so the *love of God* is a principle of restraint from sin to the soul that is upright. This kept back *Joseph* from sin, Gen. 39. 9. *How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God! How can I?* he speaks as a man that feels himself bound up from sin by the goodness and love of God that had been manifested to him, q. d. hath he delivered me from the pit into which my envious brethren cast me?

hath he in ſo miraculous a way advanced me to all this honour and power in *Egypt?* and now, after all his kindneſs and love to me, ſhall I ſin againſt him? O how can I do this againſt ſo good, ſo gracious a God? So Pſal. 97. 10. *ye that love the Lord, hate evil.* Love will cry out in the hour of Temptation, is this thy kindneſs to thy friend? Doſt thou thus requite the Lord for all his kindneſſes?

3. Thirdly, As the love of God, ſo the *intrinſecal evil and filthineſs that is in ſin* keeps back the gracious ſoul from it, *Rom.* 12. 9. abhor that which is evil, ἀποστυγοῦντες τὸ πονηρὸν, hate it as hell it ſelf: or as the *French Tranſlation* hath it, *be in horrour*: as the apprehenſions of *hell*, ſo the apprehenſions of *ſin* impreſs horrour upon the mind that's ſanctified: nothing more loathſome to an holy ſoul. Its averſations from it are with the higheſt indignation and loathing.

4. Fourthly, The renewed Nature of a *Saint* reſtrains him from ſin. Gal. 5. 17. *The ſpirit luſteth againſt the fleſh, ſo that ye cannot do the thing that ye would*: Ye cannot, why cannot ye? becauſe

because it is against your new Nature.

Beloved, This is a very remarkable thing in the experience of all renewed men, That upon the renovation of mens *principles*, their *delights*, and their *aversations* and loathings are laid quite cross and opposite to what they were before. In their carnal state, vain company, and sinful exercises were their delight. To be separated from these, and tyed to prayer, meditation, heavenly discourse, and company; O what a bondage would that have been! Now to be tyed to such carnal society, and restrained from duties of godliness, and the society of the godly, becomes a much sorer bondage to the soul.

5. Fifthly, *Experience of the bitterness of sin*, is a restraint to a gracious heart. They that have had so many sick dayes, and sorrowful nights for sin as they have had, are loth to taste that wormwood and gall again, which their soul hath still in remembrance, 2 Cor. 7. 11. *In that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought!* he would not grapple with those inward troubles again, he would not have the cheerful

light of Gods Countenance eclipſed again for all, and much more than all the pleaſures that are in ſin.

6. Sixthly, The Conſideration of the *Sufferings of Chriſt* for ſin, powerfully withholds a gracious ſoul from the Commiſſion of it : Rom. 6. 6. *Our old man is Crucified with him, that the body of ſin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin.* Were there a *knife* or *ſword* in the houſe that had been thruſt through the heart of your Father ; would you ever endure the ſight of it ? ſin was the ſword that pierced Chriſt, and ſo the death of Chriſt becomes the death of ſin in his people. Thus the Children of God, and the Children of the Devil are manifeſt, in the principles and reaſons of their *abſtinence* from ſin.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

(2.) SEcondly, They are also manifested by their *hatred of sin*: this puts a clear distinction betwixt them: for no false or unregenerate heart, can hate sin as sin; he may indeed,

1. First, Hate sin *in another*, but not *in himself*: thus one proud man hates another, *Calco superbiam Platonis*, said *Diogenes*; when he trampled *Plato*'s fine cloaths under foot; I spurn the pride of *Plato*: *Sed majori superbiâ*; as *Plato* smartly replyed, Thou trampleſt upon my pride, but it is with greater pride. *Why* (saith *Christ* to the *Hypocrite*) *beholdest thou the mote in thy brothers eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?* Matth. 7. 3. how quick in espying, and rash in censuring the smallest fault in another, is the Hypocrite! it was but one fault, and that but a small one, but a *mote* that he could find in another; yet this he quickly discerns: it may be there were many excellent graces in him, these he overlooks, but the *mote* he plainly discerns.

It

It may be that *mote* in his brothers eye had drawn many tears from it; but theſe he takes no notice of; and mean while there is a *beam* (*i. e.*) a great horrid flagitious evil in himſelf; but it is too near him to be diſcerned, or bewailed: this is a ſad *ſymptome* of a naughty heart.

2. Secondly, He may hate it in its *effects*, and *conſequents*; not in its own *nature*: as the *Thief* hates the *Gallows*, not the wickedneſs that he hath done. It is not ſin in it ſelf, but ſin in its connection with *Hell*, that is frightful to him.

The unſound profeſſour could wiſh that there were no ſuch threatnings in the *Bible* againſt ſin: when ſin tempts him, I would ſaith he, but I fear the conſequence. O ſin, could I ſeparate thee from *hell*, nothing ſhould ſeparate thee and me.

3. Thirdly, He may hate it in a *mood* or *pang*, but not with a *rooted habitual* hatred. It's plain from 2 *Pet.* 2. 22. that ſin may ſometimes lye upon the conſcience of an unregenerate man, as a load lyes upon a ſick *ſtomach*; and ſo he may diſcharge himſelf of it, by reformation, reſtitution, *&c.* but a little time reconciles the quarrel betwixt him and his Luſt again: if they fall out they will fall in again;

again; *the dog is returned to his vomit, and the ſow that was waſhed, to her wallowing in the mire.*

But an upright ſoul hates ſin in another manner, and in this hatred of ſin *the Children of God are manifeſt.*

1. Firſt, The oppoſition of ſin to God, is the very ground and formal reaſon upon which a gracious ſoul oppoſes and hates it: if it be oppoſite to the holy *nature* and *law* of *God*, it cannot but be odious in his eyes: This cut *Davids* heart, Pſal. 51. 4. *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned: q. d.* I have wronged *Uriah* greatly, I have wronged my ſelf and family greatly; but the wrong I have done to others is not worth naming, in compariſon of the wrong I have done to thee.

2. Secondly, The upright ſoul hates ſin *in himſelf*, more than he hates it *in any other:* as a man hates a *Serpent* in the *hedge*, but much more in his own *boſome:* Rom. 7. 23. *But I ſee another Law in my members:* and ver. 21. *I find then a Law, that when I would do good, evil is preſent with me: q. d.* I don't know how others find it, but I am ſure I find ſin in my very *boſome*, in my very *bowels:* it is *preſent with me. O wretched man that I am!* a gracious ſoul can

can mourn to ſee ſin in others; but to find it in himſelf, pierceth him to the very heart.

3. Thirdly, The gracious ſoul hates not only this or that *particular ſin*, but the *whole kind*, every thing that is ſinful. True hatred is πρὸς τὸ γένος, of the whole nature or kind, Pſal. 119. 104. *I hate every falſe way*; his reaſonings proceed *à quatenus ad omne*, from ſin, as ſin; concluding againſt every ſin. Sins that are profitable, and pleaſant, as well as ſins that have neither profit nor pleaſure: ſins that are *ſecret* as well as ſins that are *open*, and will defame him.

Ariſt. Rhet. lib. 2. cap. 4.

And before this tryal a falſe heart cannot ſtand; for he alwayes indulges to ſome Luſt: there is an iniquity which he cannot be ſeparated from.

4. Fourthly, The ſincere ſoul *hates* ſin with an *irreconcileable hatred*: there was a time when ſin and his ſoul fell out, but there never will be a time of reconciliation betwixt them again.

That breach which effectual conviction once made, can never be made up any more: *they will return no more to folly*, Pſal.

Pſal. 85. 8. and indeed it ſeems to them that have ſuffered ſo much for ſin, that have endured ſo many fears and ſorrows for it; the *greateſt folly* in the world to return to ſin again: no, no, they admire the mercy of their eſcape from ſin, to their dying day; and never look back upon their former ſtate but with ſhame and grief.

Ask a *Convert*, would you be back again where once you were? would you be among your old companions again? would you be fulfilling the luſts of the fleſh again? and he will tell you he would not run the hazard to abide one day or one night in that condition again, to gain all the Kingdoms of the world the next morning.

5. Fifthly, The ſincere ſoul hates ſin with a *ſuperlative hatred*: he hates it more than any other evil in the world beſides it. *Penal* evils are not pleaſant in themſelves, but yet if he muſt endure them, or ſin; then ſufferings to chuſe: Heb. 11. 25. *Chuſing rather to ſuffer affliction than enjoy the pleaſures of ſin*; the worſt of ſufferings, rather than the beſt of ſin.

6. Sixthly, To conclude, ſo deep is the hatred that upright ones bear to ſin, that nothing

nothing pleaſes them more than the thoughts of a full deliverance from it doth: Rom. 7. 24. *I thank God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* What doth he ſo heartily thank God for? O for a proſpect of his final deliverance from ſin, never to be intangled, defiled, or troubled with it any more: and this is one thing that ſweetens death to the Saints, as much as any thing in the world can do, except Chriſts victory over it, and lying in the grave for us. To think of a *grave* is not pleaſant in it ſelf, but to think of a parting time with ſin, that's ſweet and pleaſant indeed.

SECT. V.

(3.) THirdly, The Children of God and the Children of the Devil, pure Gold, and vile droſs are manifeſt as in hatred of ſin, ſo in *their troubles, and ſorrows about ſin.*

All trouble for ſin argues not ſincerity, ſome have reaſon to be troubled even for their troubles for ſin. So have they,

1. Firſt, That are only troubled for the commiſſion of ſome more groſs ſins that ſtartle the natural *Conſcience*, but not for

for inward ſins that defile the *ſoul*. *Judas* was troubled for betraying innocent blood, but not for that baſe Luſt of Covetouſneſs that was the root of it, or the want of ſincere love to *Jeſus Chriſt*: *Matth.* 27. 4, 5. Outward ſins are ſins *majoris infamiæ*, of greater *ſcandal*; but heart-ſins are oftentimes *majoris reatus*, ſins of greater *guilt*: to be troubled for groſſer ſins, and have no trouble for ordinary ſins daily incurred, is an ill ſign of a bad heart.

2. Secondly, A graceleſs heart may be much troubled at the *diſcovery* of ſin, when it is not troubled for the *guilt* of ſin, Jer. 2. 26. *As the Thief is aſhamed when he is found, ſo is the houſe of Iſrael aſhamed*: Hence it is that they ſtick not to commit *ten ſins* againſt *God*, to hide *one ſin* from the eyes of *men*. It is a mercy that ſin is the matter of mens ſhame, and that all are not arrived to that height of impudence to declare their ſin as *Sodom*, and *glory in their ſhame*; but to be aſhamed only becauſe men ſee it, and not with *Ezra* to ſay, *O my God I am aſhamed, and bluſh to look up unto thee*, Ezra 9. 6. aſhamed that thou ſeeſt it, is but Hypocriſie.

3. Thirdly,

3. Thirdly, A graceleſs heart may be troubled for the *rod* that ſin draws after it, but not for ſin it ſelf as it provokes God to inflict ſuch rods.

But the troubles of *upright ones* for ſin are of another kind and nature.

1. Firſt, They are troubled that God is wronged, and his Spirit troubled by their ſins. So the penitent *Prodigal*, *I have ſinned againſt heaven, and in thy ſight*, Luk. 15. 21. Againſt heaven, (*i. e.*) againſt him whoſe Throne is in Heaven, a great, glorious, and infinite Majeſty: a poor worm of the earth, hath lifted up his hand againſt the God of Heaven.

2. Secondly, They are troubled for the *defilement* of their own ſouls by ſin: hence they are compared in *Prov.* 25. 26. to *a troubled fountain*; you know it's the property of a living ſpring when any filth falls into it, or that which lyes in the bottom of its chanel is raiſed and defiles its ſtreams; never to leave working till it have purged it ſelf of it, and recovered its purity again.

So it is with a righteous man; he loves purity in the *precept*, *Pſal.* 119. 140. and he loves it no leſs in the *principle* and *practice*: he thinks it is hell enough to lye under

under the *pollution* of ſin, if he ſhould never come under *damnation* for it.

3. Thirdly, They are troubled for the *eſtrangements of God*, and the hiding of his face from them becauſe of their ſin. It would go cloſe to an ingenuous ſpirit to ſee a dear and faithful friend whom he hath grieved, to look ſtrange and ſhy upon him at the next meeting; as if he did not know him: much more doth it go to the heart of a gracious man to ſee the face of God turned from him, and not to be towards him as in times paſt. This went to *Davids* heart after his fall, as you may ſee, Pſal. 51. 11. *Caſt me not away from thy preſence, and take not thy holy ſpirit from me*; *q. d.* Lord, if thou turn thy back upon me, and eſtrange thy ſelf from me, I am a loſt man: that is the greateſt miſchief that can befall me.

4. Fourthly, Their troubles for ſin *run deep*, to what other mens do. They are ſtrong to bear other troubles, but quail and faint under this: *Pſal.* 38. 4. other ſorrows may for the preſent be violent, and make more noiſe; but this ſorrow ſoaks deeper into the ſoul.

5. Fifthly, Their troubles for ſin are more *private* and *ſilent troubles* than others are;

are; *their ſore runs in the night*; as it is *Pſal.* 77. 2. not but that they may, and do open their troubles to men, (and it is a mercy when they meet with a judicious tender and experienced Chriſtian to unboſome themſelves unto:) but when all is done, it is God and thy ſoul alone that muſt whiſper out the matter: *ille verè dolet, qui ſine teſte dolet*: that is *ſincere ſorrow* for ſin indeed, which is expreſſed ſecretly to God in the cloſet.

6. Sixthly, Their troubles are incurable by creature comforts: it is not the removing ſome outward preſſures and inconveniencies, that can remove their burden; nothing but pardon, peace, and witneſſed reconciliation can quiet the gracious heart.

7. Seventhly, Their troubles for ſin are *ordinate*, and kept in their own place; they dare not ſtamp the dignity of Chriſts blood upon their worthleſs tears and groans for ſin: *Lava lachrymas meas domine*, Aug. Lord, waſh my ſinful tears in the blood of Chriſt, was once the deſire of a true *penitent*. And thus our trouble for ſin ſhews us what our hearts are.

SECT.

SECT. VI.

(4.) FOurthly, The behaviour and carriage of the ſoul with reſpect to *ſubjection* to the commands of ſin, ſhews what our eſtate and condition is. This will ſeparate *droſs* from *gold*. All unregenerate men are the *ſervants of ſin*, they ſubject themſelves to its commands. This the Scripture ſometimes calls a *Converſation in the luſts of the fleſh*, Eph. 2. 3. ſometimes the *ſelling of themſelves to ſin*, 1 King. 21. 20. Now as a judicious *divine* obſerves, though the Children of God complain with *Paul*, Rom. 7. 14, 15. that they are *ſold under ſin*, yet there is a vaſt difference betwixt theſe two: the Saints are ſold to it by *Adam*, but others by their own continued conſent. But to ſhew you the difference in this matter, I conceive it neceſſary to ſhew, wherein the reigning power of ſin doth not conſiſt, and then wherein it doth: that you may plainly diſcern who are in ſubjection to the reigning power of their corruptions, and who are not. Now there be divers things common both to the regenerate, and

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and unregenerate, and we cannot ſay the dominion of ſin lyes in any or in all of them, viz. abſtractly and ſimply conſidered.

1. Firſt, Both one, and other having *Original Corruption* dwelling in them, may alſo find this fountain breaking forth into groſs and ſcandalous ſins: but we cannot ſay that becauſe original Corruption thus breaks forth into groſs and ſcandalous ſins in both; therefore it muſt needs reign in the one, as well as in the other: a righteous man may *fall before the wicked*, as it is *Prov.* 25. 26. he may fall in the dirt of groſſer iniquities, and furniſh them with matter of reproach. So did *David*, *Peter*, *Abraham*, and many more of the Lords upright hearted ones, whoſe ſouls nevertheleſs ſin did not reign over, by a voluntary ſubjection to its commands, nor muſt this embolden any to ſin with more liberty.

2. Secondly, Though an upright ſoul fall once and again into ſin, though he reiterate the ſame act of ſin, which he hath repented of before; yet it cannot meerly from thence be concluded, that therefore ſin reigns over him, as it doth over a wicked man that makes it his daily trade.

trade. I confeſs every *reiteration* of ſin, puts a farther *aggravation* upon it: and it's ſad we ſhould repent, and ſin; and ſin, and repent: but yet you read Prov. 24. 16. *A juſt man falleth ſeven times, and riſeth up again: Jobs* friends were good men, yet he tells them, *Theſe ten times have ye reproached me*, Job 19. 3. This indeed ſhews a heart that greatly needs purging; for it is with relapſes into ſpiritual, as it is with relapſes into natural diſeaſes: a *recidivation* or return of the diſeaſe ſhews that the *morbifique matter* was not duly purged; but though it ſhew the *foulneſs*, it doth not alwayes prove the *falſeneſs* of the heart.

3. Thirdly, Though one may be impatient of the reproof of his ſin, as well as the other; yet that alone will not conclude ſin to be in full dominion over one, as it is over the other.

It's pity any good man ſhould ſtorm at a juſt rebuke of ſin; that ſuch a precious oyle as is proper to *heal*, ſhould be conceited to *break* his head: but yet fleſh will be tender, and touchy; even in good men. *Aſa* was a good man, and yet he was wroth with the *Prophet* who reproved him; as you find, 2 *Chron.* 16. 10. yet I doubt

doubt not but their Conſciences ſmite them for it, when pride ſuffers not another to do it: a reproof may be ill tim'd, and ill managed by another; and ſo may provoke; but they will hear the voice of conſcience in another manner.

4. Fourthly, Though in both ſome one *particular ſin* may have more power than another, yet neither doth this alone conclude that therefore that ſin muſt reign in one, as it doth in another: indeed the beloved Luſt of every wicked man is King over his ſoul; but yet a godly mans conſtitution, calling, *&c.* may incline him more to one ſin than another; and yet neither that, nor any other may be ſaid to be in dominion: for though *David* ſpeaks of *his iniquity*, (*i.e.*) his *ſpecial ſin*, Pſal. 18. 23. which ſome ſuppoſe to be the ſin of lying, from that intimation, *Pſal.* 119. 29. yet you ſee in one place he begs *God to keep him from it*, and in the other he tells us *he kept himſelf from it*, and both ſhew he was not the ſervant of it.

5. Fifthly, Though both may ſin againſt knowledge, yet it will not follow from thence, that therefore ſins againſt knowledge muſt needs be ſins in dominion in the

the one, as they are in the other: there was too much light abuſed, and violenced in *Davids* deliberated ſin; as he confeſſes, *Pſal.* 51. 6. and the ſad ſtory it ſelf too plainly ſhews; and yet in the main, *David* was an upright man ſtill, though this conſideration of the fact ſhrewdly wounded his integrity: and ſtands upon record for a caution to all others.

SECT. VII.

WE have ſeen what doth *not* infer the dominion of ſin in the former particulars, being ſimply conſidered; I ſhall next ſhew you what *doth*; and how the ſincere and falſe heart are diſtinguiſhed in this tryal. And

1. Firſt, *Aſſent* and *Conſent* upon deliberation notes the ſoul to be under the *dominion* of ſin: when the mind *approves* ſin, and the will gives its *plenary conſent* to it; This ſets up ſin in its *Throne*, and puts the ſoul into ſubjection to it: for the dominion of ſin conſiſts in its authority over us, and our voluntary ſubjection to it. This you find to be the character of a wicked graceleſs perſon; Pſal. 36. 4. *He*

deviſeth miſchief upon his bed; he ſetteth himſelf in a way that is not good, he abhorreth not evil.

The beſt men may fall into ſin through miſtake, or be precipitated into ſin through the violence of Temptation; but to *deviſe miſchief*, and *ſet himſelf* in an evil way; this notes full aſſent of the mind, and then *not to abhor evil*, notes full conſent of the will, and theſe two being given to ſin, not only *antecedently* to the acting of it; but alſo *conſequently* to it: to like it afterward, as well as before; this puts the ſoul fully under the power of ſin; what can it give more?

This (as one ſaith) in direct oppoſition to the *Apoſtle*, Rom. 12. 1. is to preſent their bodies a dead ſacrifice, unholy, and abominable to God; acceptable to the Devil, which is their unreaſonable ſervice: all men by nature are given to ſin, but theſe men give themſelves to it.

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2. Secondly, The cuſtomary practice of ſin, ſubjects the ſoul to the Dominion of ſin: and ſo *he that is born of God, doth not commit ſin*, 1 Joh. 3. 9. Fall into ſin, yea the ſame ſin he may, and that often; but then it's not without reluctance, repentance,

pentance, and a *protest* entred by the soul in heaven against it: So that sin hath not a quiet possession of his soul; he is not the *servant of sin*, nor doth he willingly walk after its Commandments: but so do its own servants; it's their daily practice: Jer. 9. 3. *They proceed from evil, to evil.*

3. Thirdly, *Delight* in sin proves the *dominion* of sin. So the servants of sin are described, Isa. 66. 3. *They have chosen their own wayes, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.*

Look as our delight in God is the *measure of our holiness*; so our delight in sin is *the measure of our sinfulness*. Delight in sin is one of the uppermost rounds of the *ladder*, and much higher the soul of a sinner cannot go, till it be turned off into hell. *It's a sport to a fool to do mischief*, Prov. 10. 23. Never merrier than when he hath the *devil* for his play-fellow, saith one upon that place: Mr. *Trap*.

4. Fourthly, *Impatience of Christs yoke, and Government*, argues the soul to be the subject of sin. This is clear from the *Apostles* reasoning in Rom. 6. 17, 18. *But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart the*

form of doctrine which was delivered you: being then made free from ſin, ye became the ſervants of righteouſneſs: where you ſee plainly that no man can have his *manumiſſion* or freedom from ſin, that comes not into Chriſts ſervice, and yields himſelf up to his obedience.

So then to fret at Chriſts laws that tye us up from our Luſts, to be weary of all ſpiritual imployments as a burden intolerable, never to be in our *element* and *Centre* till we are off from God, and plunging in the world, and our luſts; this is a ſad note of a ſoul in ſubjection to ſin.

Object. *But may not an upright ſoul find ſome wearineſs in ſpiritual things?*

Sol. Doubtleſs he may, for he hath *fleſh* as well as *ſpirit*, and though the ſpirit be willing, the fleſh is weak: he is ſanctified but in part, and his delight in the Law of God is but according to, or *after the inner man*, Rom. 7. 22. but he ſees *another law in his members*, (i. e.) contrary inclinations. However, if he be weary ſometimes in the duties of godlineſs, to be ſure he is more weary out of them, and is not *Centred* and at reſt till he be with his God again: But the Carnal

heart

heart is where it would be when it is in the ſervice of ſin: and as a fiſh upon dry land, when ingaged in ſpiritual duties. Eſpecially ſuch as are ſecret, and have no external allurements of reputation to engage him to them.

But what ſurpriſals or captivities to ſin ſoever may befall an upright ſoul, yet it appears by theſe eight following particulars, that he is not the ſervant of ſin, nor in full ſubjection to it. For,

1. Firſt, Though he may be drawn to ſin, yet he cannot *reflect* upon his ſin without ſhame and ſorrow; which plainly ſhews it to be an involuntary ſurprize. So *Peter* wept bitterly, *Matth.* 26. 75. and *David* mourned for his ſin heartily; others can fetch new pleaſures out of their old ſins by reflecting on them: and ſome can glory in their ſhame, *Phil.* 3. 19. Some are ſtupid and ſenſeleſs after ſin, and the ſorrow of a carnal heart for it, is but a morning dew: but it is far otherwiſe with Gods people.

2. Secondly, Though a Saint may be drawn to ſin, yet it is not with a deliberate and full *conſent* of his will: their delight is in the law of God, *Rom.* 7. 22. *They do that which they would not*, ver. 16.

(*i. e.*) there are inward diſlikes from the new nature: and as for that caſe of *David*, which ſeems to have ſo much of counſel and deliberation in it; yet it was but in a ſingle *act*; it was not in the general *Courſe* of his life: he was upright in all things (*i. e.*) in the general courſe and tenour of his life, 1 *Kings* 15. 5.

3. Thirdly, Though an upright ſoul may fall into ſin, yet he is reſtleſs and unquiet in that condition; like a bone out of joynt: and that ſpeaks him to be none of ſins ſervants: as on the contrary, if a man be ingaged in the external duties of Religion, and be reſtleſs and unquiet there; his heart is not in it, he is not at reſt till he be again in his earthly buſineſs; this man cannot be reckoned Chriſts ſervant: a gracious heart is much after that rate imployed in the work of ſin, that a carnal heart is when imployed in the work of Religion: that's a good rule, *ea tantum dicuntur ineſſe, quæ inſunt per modum quietis:* that's a mans true temper wherein he is at reſt: poor *David* fell into ſin, but he had no reſt in his bones becauſe of it, *Pſal.* 51. 10, 11, 12. if his heart be off from God and duty for a little while, yet he recollects himſelf,

and

and saith as Psal. 116 7. *Return unto thy rest O my soul.*

4. Fourthly, Though a sincere Christian fall into sin, and commit evil; yet he *proceeds not from evil to evil*, as the ungodly do: *Jer.* 9. 3. but makes his fall into one sin, a caution to prevent another sin. *Peter* by his fall got establishment for time to come: if God will speak peace to them, they are careful to return no more to folly, Psal. 85. 8. *In that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought? yea what fear?* 2 Cor. 7. 11. It is not so with the servants of sin, one sin leaves them much more disposed to another sin.

5. Fifthly, A sincere *Christian* may be drawn to sin, but yet he would be glad with all his heart to be rid of sin. It would be more to him than thousands of gold or silver, that he might grieve and offend God no more; and that shews sin is not in dominion over him: he that is under the dominion of sin, is loth to leave his Lusts. Sins servants are not willing to part with it, they hold it fast, and refuse to let it go, as that text expresses it, *Jer.* 8. 5. but the great complaint of the upright is expressed by the

Apoſtle according to the true ſenſe of their hearts, in Rom. 7. 24. *Who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?*

6. Sixthly, It appears they yield not themſelves willingly to obey ſin, in as much as it is the matter of their Joy when God orders any providence to prevent ſin in them: *Bleſſed be the Lord* (ſaid *David* to *Abigail*) *and bleſſed be thy advice, and bleſſed be thou, that haſt kept me this day from ſhedding blood*, 1 Sam. 15. 32, 33.

Here's bleſſing upon bleſſing for a ſin-preventing providence. The author is bleſſed, the inſtrument bleſſed, the means bleſſed. O it's a bleſſed thing in the eyes of a ſincere man to be kept from ſin: he reckons it a great deliverance, a very happy eſcape if he be kept from ſin.

7. Seventhly, This ſhews that ſome who may be drawn to commit ſin, yet are none of the ſervants of ſin, That they do heartily beg the aſſiſtance of grace to keep them from ſin: *keep back thy ſervant from preſumptuous ſins* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 19. 13.) *let them not have dominion over me*; *q. d.* Lord, I find propenſions to ſin, in my nature; yea, and ſtrong ones too; if thou leave me to my ſelf, I am carried into ſin as eaſily as a feather down the Torrent.

Torrent. *O Lord keep back thy servant:* and there is no petition that upright ones pour out their hearts to God in, either more frequently, or more ardently than in this, to be kept back from sin.

8. Eighthly, and Lastly, This shews the soul not to be under the dominion of sin, that it doth not only cry to God to be kept back from sin, but uses the means of prevention himself; he resists it, as well as prays against it, Psal. 18. 23. *I was also upright before him, and kept my self from mine iniquity.* So Job 31. 1. *I have made a Covenant with mine eyes*; and yet more fully in Isa. 33. 15. *he shaketh his hands from holding bribes, and stoppeth his ears from hearing blood; and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.* See with what care the *portals* are shut at which sin useth to enter. All these things are very relieving considerations to poor souls questioning their integrity under the frequent surprisals of sin. And the next tryal no less.

SECT. VIII.

(5.) FIfthly, Our *oppoſition* to and *conflicts* with ſin, diſcover what we are, gold, or droſs.

There are *conflicts* with ſin both in the regenerate, and in the unregenerate; but there is a vaſt difference betwixt them, as will appear in the following account.

1. Firſt, There is an *univerſal*, and there is a *particular* oppoſition to ſin; the former is found in regenerate, the latter in unregenerate ſouls: a gracious heart hates every falſe way, *Pſal.* 119. 104. and muſt needs do ſo, becauſe he hates and oppoſes ſin as ſin; ſo that he can have no *peccatum in deliciis*; no excepted or reſerved Luſt; but fights againſt the whole body, and every limb and member of the body of ſin.

But it is not ſo with the *Hypocrite* or carnal profeſſour: he hath evermore ſome reſerved ſin, that he cannot part with.

2. Secondly, There is an oppoſition betwixt the *new nature* and ſin, and there is an oppoſition betwixt *natural Conſcience* and ſin; the former is the caſe of an upright

upright ſoul, the later may be of a ſelf-deceiver.

A regenerate perſon oppoſeth ſin, becauſe there is an irreconcileable *Antipathy* betwixt it, and the new nature in him; as is clear from Gal. 5. 17. *The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh; and theſe are contrary the one to the other:* by *fleſh* underſtand Corrupt nature; by *Spirit* not only the ſpirit of man, but the ſpirit of God, or principle of regeneration in man: by the luſting of theſe two againſt each other, underſtand the deſire and endeavour of each others deſtruction and ruine: and the ground of all this is the contrariety of theſe two natures.

Theſe are contrary one to the other: there is a twofold oppoſition betwixt them, one *formal*, their very *natures* are oppoſite: the other *effective*, their workings and deſigns are oppoſite, as it is betwixt fire and water.

But the oppoſitions found in unrenewed ſouls againſt ſin, is not from their natures, for ſin is ſuitable enough to that; but from the light that is in their minds and conſciences which ſcares and terrifies them. Such was that in *Darius*, Dan. 6. 14.

6. 14. *He was ſore diſpleaſed with himſelf, and ſet his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and laboured till the going down of the Sun to deliver him*: here the conteſt was betwixt ſenſe of honour upon one ſide, and conviction of Conſcience on the other ſide.

Sometimes a generous and noble diſpoſition oppoſes ſordid and baſe actions: *Major ſum, & ad majora natus; quam ut corporis mei ſim mancipium.* I am greater, and born to greater things; than that I ſhould be a ſlave to my body, ſaid a brave *Heathen*.

3. Thirdly, There is a *permanent*, and there is a *tranſient* oppoſition to ſin; the former is the caſe of Gods people, the latter of temporary and unſound profeſſours.

The Saint when he draws the *ſword* in this warfare againſt ſin, throws away the *ſcabbard*: no end of this combate with ſin till life end: their life and their troubles are finiſhed together: 2 Tim. 4. 7. *I have fought the good fight, and have finiſhed my Courſe.*

But in other men it is but a tranſient quarrel: out with ſin one day, and in another: and the reaſon is plain by what

was

was noted before; it is not the opposition of two natures: it is like the opposition of the *Wind* and *Tyde*, these may be contrary and make a stormy sea to day; but the wind may come about, and go as the Tyde goes to morrow: but in a Christian it is as the opposition of the *river* and the *dam*, one must give way to the other, there's no reconciling them: but the other like the dog, returns to his *vomit*, 2 *Pet.* 2. *ult.*

4. Fourthly, There is an opposition to the *root* of sin, and an opposition to the *fruits* of sin. A gracious soul opposeth root and fruit, but others the latter only. The great design of an upright soul, is not only to lop off this or that branch, but to kill the root of sin which is in his nature: Rom. 7. 24. *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* but the great care and endeavours of others is to suppress outward acts of sin, and escape the mischievous consequents of it: yea, their study is as *Lanctantius* phraseth it, *Potius abscondere, quam abscindere vitia:* to hide, rather than to kill their Lusts

5. Fifthly, There is an opposition to sin, *in the strength of God*, and an opposition to sin, *in our own strength*: The former

mer is proper to a real Chriſtian, the later is found frequently with unſanctified perſons: when a Chriſtian goes forth againſt any ſin, it is in the ſtrength of God: So you read their rule directs them, Eph. 6. 10. *Be ſtrong in the Lord, and the power of his might*: *take unto you the whole armour of God:* and ſuitably you ſhall find them frequently upon their knees begging ſtrength from heaven againſt their Luſts; 2 Cor. 12. 8. *For this cauſe I beſought the Lord thrice*, ſaith *Paul* (*i. e.*) often and earneſtly, that the temptation might depart from him.

But others go forth againſt ſin only in the ſtrength of their own reſolutions; ſo did *Pendleton* in our ſtory: theſe Reſolutions, or vows, which they have put themſelves under, are as frequently fruſtrated, as made.

6. Sixthly, There is a *ſucceſsful* oppoſition to ſin, and an oppoſition that comes to *nothing*. The former is that of true Chriſtians, the later is found among unregenerate men.

The work of Mortification in the Saints is *progreſſive*, and increaſing: hence Rom. 6. 6. *Our old man is Crucified with him*, that *the body of ſin might be deſtroyed*.

Sin

Sin dyes in believers muchwhat as crucified persons use to dye; *viz.* a slow, lingering, gradual; but sure death: its vigour and life expires by degrees: or as a consumptive person dyes; for to that also he alludes here: there is a disease which is called *Consumptio totius*, a Consumption of the whole, and those that dye of that disease languish more and more till at last they drop *sensim*, *sine sensu*, by imperceptible degrees and steps into the grave.

But in the unregenerate whatever conflicts they have with sin; no corruption falls before it: it may be said of them, as the Church in another case complains of her self, Esa. 26. 18. *We have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind, we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth, neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.* So it fares with these professours, they pray, they hear, they vow, they resolve; but when all is done, their lusts are as strong and vigorous as ever: no degree of mortification appears after all.

And thus much of the tryal of our sincerity by our carriage towards sin.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Shewing what proof and tryal, is made of the ſoundneſs or unſoundneſs of our graces by the duties of Religion which we perform.

SECT. I.

WE now come (according to the method propoſed) to make tryal of the truth or falſeneſs of grace, by the duties we daily perform in Religion. And certainly they alſo have the uſe and efficacy of fire, for this diſcovery, 1 Joh. 2. 4, 5. *He that ſaith I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments* [*is a lyar*] *and the truth is not in him: but whoſo keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: and hereby know we that we are in him.*

This is a *practical lye*; of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks here, by which men deceive

ceive others for awhile, and themselves for ever: a lye not *spoken*, but *done*; when a mans course of life contradicts his profession. The life of an Hypocrite is but one long or continued *lye*: he saith or professeth he knows God, but takes no care at all to obey him in the duties he commands: he either neglects them, or if he perform them, it is not as God requires: if they *draw nigh him with their lips, yet their heart is far from him*: Isa. 29. 13. *Thou art near in their mouth, but far from their reins*, Jer. 12. 2.

There are some that feel the influence and power of their Communion with the Lord in duties, going down to their very reins: and there are others whose lips and tongues only are toucht with Religion.

This is an age of light and much profession: men cannot now keep up a reputation in the sober and professing world, whilest they let down, and totally neglect the duties of Religion: but surely if men would be but just to themselves, their very performances of duty would tell them what their hearts are.

SECT.

SECT. II.

FOr there are among others theſe ten following particulars that do very clearly difference the ſound from the unſound profeſſour.

1. Firſt, The deſigns and true Levels and aims of mens hearts in duty will tell them what they are.

An Hypocrite aims Low, Hoſea 7. 14. *They have not cryed unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds; they aſſembled themſelves for Corn and Wine, and they rebel againſt me.* It is not for Chriſt, and pardon, for mortification, and holineſs; but for corn, and wine: thus they make a Market of Religion! all their ends in duty are either carnal, natural, or legal; it is either to accommodate their carnal ends, or ſatisfie and quiet their Conſciences: and ſo their duties are performed as a *ſin-offering* to God.

But an upright heart, hath very high, and pure aims in duty; *the deſire of their ſoul is to God*: Iſa. 26. 8. *their ſoul follows hard after God*: Pſal. 63. 8. *One thing have I deſired of the Lord, that will I ſeek after; that I might dwell in the houſe of the Lord*

Lord all the dayes of my life, to ſee the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple, Pſal. 27. 4. Theſe are the true *Eagles* that play at the *Sun*, and will not ſtoop to low and earthly objects. Alas! if the enjoyment of God be miſſed in a duty, it is not the greateſt enlargements of gifts will ſatisfie: he comes back like a man that hath taken a long journey to meet his friend upon important buſineſs, and loſt his labour; his friend was not there.

2. Secondly, The *engagements* of mens hearts to God in duties will tell them what they are. The *hypocrite* takes little heed to his heart, *Eſa.* 29. 13. they are not afflicted really for the hardneſs, deadneſs, unbelief, and wanderings of their hearts in duty; as upright ones are: nor do they engage their hearts, and labour to get them up with God in duty as his people do. *I have intreated thy favour with my whole heart*, ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 119. 58. they are not pleaſed in duty till they feel their hearts ſtand towards God like a bow in its full bent. I ſay not it is alwayes ſo with them, what would they give that it might be ſo! but ſurely if their ſouls in duty be empty of God, they are fill'd with trouble and ſorrow.

3. Thirdly,

3. Thirdly, The Conſcience men make of *ſecret* as well as of *publick* duties, will tell them what their hearts and graces are, true, or falſe. A vain Profeſſour is curious in the former, and either *negligent*, or at beſt *formal* in the latter: for he finds no inducements of honour, applauſe, or oſtentation of gifts externally moving him to them: nor hath he any experience of the ſweetneſs and benefit of ſuch duties internally to allure and engage his ſoul to them.

The *Hypocrite* therefore is not for the *cloſet*, but the *Synagogue*, *Matth.* 6. 5, 6. not but that education, example, or the impulſe of conſcience may ſometimes drive him thither; but it is not his daily delight to be there; his meat and drink to retire from the clamour of the world to enjoy God in ſecret. 'Tis the obſervation of their duties is the great inducement to theſe men to perform them; and verily ſaith our Lord, ver. 2. *they have their reward*, ἀπέχουσι they have it away; or they have carryed off all the benefit and advantage that ever they ſhall have by Religion. Much good do them with their applauſe and honour, let them make much of that aery reward, for

for it's all that ever they ſhall have.

But now for a ſoul truly gracious, he cannot long ſubſiſt without ſecret prayer. 'Tis true, there is not alwayes an equal freedom and delight, a like enlargement and comfort in thoſe retirements: but yet he cannot be without them: he finds the want of his *ſecret*, in his *publick duties*: if he and his God have not met in ſecret, and had ſome Communion in the *morning*, he ſenſibly finds it in the deadneſs and unprofitableneſs of his heart and life all the *day* after.

4. Fourthly, The *ſpirituality* of our *duties* tryes the *ſincerity* of our *graces*: an unregenerate heart is *carnal*, whileſt engaged in duties that are *ſpiritual*. Some men deceive themſelves in thinking they are ſpiritual men, becauſe their imployment and calling is about ſpiritual things, *Hoſea* 9. 7. this indeed gives them the *denomination*, but not the *frame* of *ſpiritual men*: and others judge themſelves ſpiritual perſons, becauſe they frequently perform and attend upon ſpiritual duties: but alas the heart and ſtate may be carnal notwithſtanding all this. O my friends, it is not enough that the *object* of your duties is ſpiritual, that they reſpect

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an holy God; nor that the *matter* be ſpiritual, that you be converſant about holy things; but the *frame* of your heart muſt be ſpiritual, an heavenly temper of ſoul is neceſſary, and what are the moſt heavenly duties without it?

The *end* and *deſign* you aim at muſt be ſpiritual, the enjoyment of God, and a growing conformity to him in holineſs; elſe, multiply duties as the ſand on the ſea ſhore, and they all will not amount to one evidence of your ſincerity. *God is my witneſs whom I ſerve with my ſpirit*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 1. 9. he ſeems to appeal to God in this matter. I ſerve God in my ſpirit, and God knows that I do ſo. I dare appeal to him that it is ſo: he knows that my heart is with him, or would be with him in my duties: the armes of my faith do either ſenſibly graſp, or are ſtretched out towards him in my duties. O how little ſavour do gracious hearts find in the moſt excellent duties if God and their ſouls do not ſenſibly meet in them!

Certainly Reader, There is a time when God comes nigh to men in duty, when he deals familiarly with men, and ſenſibly fills their ſouls with unuſual powers and

and delights. The near approaches of God to their ſouls are felt by them, (for ſouls have their ſenſes as well as bodies;) and now are their minds abſtracted and marvellouſly refined from all that is material and earthly, and ſwallowed up in ſpiritual excellencies and glories.

Theſe are the real *prelibations* or foretaſtes of glory, which no man can by words make another to underſtand, as he himſelf doth that feels them.

Theſe ſeaſons I confeſs do but rarely occur to the beſt of Chriſtians, nor continue long when they do: alas! this wine is too ſtrong for ſuch weak bottles as we are. *Hold Lord* (ſaid an holy man once) *it is enough, thy poor creature is a clay veſſel, and can hold no more:* this is that *Joy unſpeakable and full of glory*, which is mentioned, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7, 8. ſomething that words cannot deſcribe: theſe ſeaſons are the *golden ſpots* of our lives, when we are admitted to theſe near and ineffable views and taſtes of God: poſſibly ſome poor Chriſtians can ſay but little to theſe things; their ſorrows are exerciſed in duties more than their Joys: they

Rara hora, brevis mora; ſapit quidem ſuaviſſimè, ſed guſtatur rariſſimè. Bernard.

they are endeavouring to mount, but the ſtone hangs at the heel: they eſſay, but cannot riſe to that height that others do; who are got up by their labouring faith into the upper Region, and there diſplay their wings and ſing in the Sun-beams: but though they cannot reach this height, yet have they no ſatisfaction in duties wherein there is no intercourſe betwixt God and their ſouls.

That which contents another, will not content a Chriſtian: if the *King* be abſent, men will bow to the empty *chair*; but if God be abſent, an empty duty gives no ſatisfaction to a gracious ſpirit. The pooreſt Chriſtian is found panting after God by ſincere deſires, and labouring to get up that dead and vain heart to God in duty; though alas! it's many times but the rolling of the returning ſtone againſt the hill: yet he never expects advantage by that duty wherein the ſpirit of God is not; nor doth he expect the ſpirit of God ſhould be, where his own ſpirit is not.

5. Fifthly, *Aſſiduity* and *conſtancy* in duties of Religion makes a notable diſcovery of the ſoundneſs or rottenneſs of mens hearts. The *Hypocrite* may ſhew ſome

some zeal and forwardness in duties for a time, but he will *jade* and give out at length: Job 27. 10. *Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he alwayes call upon God?* No, he will not. If his motions in Religion were *natural*, they would be constant; but they are *artificial*, and he is moved by external inducements; and so must needs be off and on: he prays himself weary of praying, and hears himself weary of hearing: his heart is not delighted in his duties, and therefore his duties must needs grow stale and dry to him after a while. There be three seasons in which the zeal of an *Hypocrite* may be inflamed in duties.

First, When some imminent danger threatens him, some smart rod of God is shaked over him: *when he slew them, then they sought him, and returned and enquired early after God*, Psal. 78. 34. O the goodly words they give! the fair promises they make; and yet all the while *they do but flatter him with their lips, and lye unto him with their tongues*, ver. 36, 37. for let but that danger pass over, and the heavens clear up again, and he will restrain prayer, and return to his old course again.

Secondly, When the times Countenance and favour Religion, and the wind is in his back; O what a zeal will he have for God! ſo in the ſtony ground, *Matth.* 13. 5. the ſeed ſprung up and flouriſhed till the ſun of perſecution aroſe, and then it faded away; for it had no depth of earth: no deep ſolid inward work or principle of grace to maintain it.

Thirdly, When ſelf-ends and deſigns are accommodated and promoted by theſe things; this was the caſe of *Jehu*, 2 Kings 10. 16. *come ſee my zeal*, for what? for a baſe ſelf-intereſt, not for God: how fervently will ſome men pray, preach, and profeſs, whileſt they ſenſibly feel the incomes and profit of theſe duties to their fleſh; whileſt they are admired and applauded!

Theſe external incentives will put an hypocrite into an hot fit of zeal; but then as it is with a man whoſe colours are raiſed by the heat of the fire, and not by the healthfulneſs of a good conſtitution; it ſoon fades and falls again.

But bleſſed be God it is not ſo with all. The man whoſe heart is upright with his God, will *keep judgement, and do righteouſneſs at all times*, Pſal. 106. 3. whether

ther dangers threaten or no; whether times favour Religion or no; whether his earthly interest be promoted by it or no; he will be holy still: he will not part with his duties when they are stript naked of those external advantages: as the *addition* of these things to Religion did not at first engage him, so the *substraction* of them, cannot disengage him.

If his duty become his *reproach*, yet *Moses* will not forsake it: *Heb.* 11. 26. If he lose his company, and be left alone, yet *Paul* will not flinch from his duty, 2 *Tim.* 4. 16. if hazard surround duty on every side, yet *Daniel* will not quit it, *Dan.* 6. 10. for they considered these things at first, and counted the cost, they still find Religion is rich enough to pay the cost of all that they can lose or suffer for its sake; yea, and that with an hundred-fold reward, now in this life. They never had other design in engaging in Religious duties, but to help them to heaven, and if they recover heaven at last; whether the way to it prove better, or worse; they have their design, and end: and therefore they will be stedfast, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord, as knowing

their labour is not in vain in the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 15. *ult.*

6. Sixthly, The *humility* and ſelf-denyal of our hearts in duties will try what they are for their integrity and ſincerity towards God. Doth a man boaſt his own excellencies in prayer as the Phariſee did, Luke 18. 10, 11. *God I thank thee I am not as other men:* which he ſpeaks not in an humble acknowledgement of the grace of God which differences man from man; but in a proud oſtentation of his own excellencies. Doth a man make his duties his *Saviours*, and truſt to them in a vain confidence of their worth and dignity? *Luke* 18. 9. Surely his heart which is thus lifted up within him, is not upright; *Hab.* 2. 4. But if the heart be upright indeed, it will expreſs its humility, as in all other things, ſo eſpecially in its duties wherein it approaches the great and holy God.

Firſt, It will manifeſt its humility in thoſe awful and reverential apprehenſions it hath of God, as *Abraham* did, Gen. 18. 27. *And now I that am but duſt and aſhes* (ſaith he) *have taken upon me to ſpeak unto God.* The humility of *Abra-*

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hams ſpirit is in ſome meaſure to be found in all *Abrahams* Children.

Secondly, In thoſe low and vile thoughts they have of themſelves, and their religious performances: thus that poor penitent *Luke* 7. 38. ſtood behind Chriſt weeping: *yet the dogs eat the crumbs*, ſaith another, *Mark* 7. 28. I am more bruitiſh than any man, ſaith a third, *Prov.* 30. 7. I abhor my ſelf in duſt and aſhes, ſaith a fourth, *Job* 42. 6. and as little eſteem they have for their performances, Eſa. 64. 6. *all our righteouſneſſes are as filthy rags.* I deny not but there is pride and vanity in the moſt upright ones; but what place ſoever it finds in their converſes with men, it finds little room in their converſes with God; or if it do, they loath it, and themſelves for it.

Thirdly, But eſpecially their humility in duty is diſcovered in renouncing all their duties in point of dependance, and relying intirely upon Chriſt for righteouſneſs, and acceptance: they have ſpecial regard to duties in point of *obedience*, but none at all in point of *Relyance*.

7. Seventhly, The *Communion* and *intercourſe* which is betwixt God and men

in duties notably diſcovers what their perſons and graces are. And it muſt needs do ſo, becauſe what communion ſoever the *hypocrite* hath with duties, or with *Saints* in duties; to be ſure he hath none with God.

None can *come nigh* to God in duty, but thoſe that are *made nigh* by reconciliation: all ſpecial Communion with Chriſt, is founded in real union with Chriſt: but *The wicked are eſtranged from the womb*, Pſal. 58. 3.

But now there is real communion betwixt God and his people in duties. Truly our fellowſhip, κοινωνία, our Communion is with the Father and Son, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. God pours forth of his ſpirit upon them, and they pour forth their hearts to God. It is ſenſibly manifeſt to them when the Lord comes nigh to their ſouls in duty, and as ſenſible they are of his retreats and withdrawments from their ſouls, *Cant.* 3. 1, 4. They find their hearts like the *Heliotrope*, open and ſhut according to the acceſſes and receſſes of the divine preſence. They that never felt any thing of this nature, may call it a fancy, but the Lords people are abundantly ſatisfied of the reality thereof.

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Their very Countenance is altered by it, 1 *Sam.* 1. 18. the ſad and cloudy countenance of *Hannah* cleared up, there was fair weather in her very face, aſſoon as ſhe knew ſhe had audience and acceptance with her God. I know all commmnion with God doth not conſiſt in joyes and Comforts, there is as real communion with God in the mortifying and humbling influences of his ſpirit upon men, as in the cheering and refreſhing influences thereof. I know alſo there is a great diverſity in the degrees and meaſures thereof. It is not alike in all Chriſtians, nor with the ſame Chriſtian at all times: but that real Chriſtians have true and real Communion with God in their duties, is a truth as manifeſt in ſpiritual ſenſe and experience of the Saints, as their communion is one with another.

8. Eighthly, *Growth* and improvement of grace in duties notably differences the ſound, and unſound heart. All the duties in the world will never make an hypocrite more holy, humble, or heavenly than he is: but as the watering of a dry ſtick will ſooner rot it, than make it flouriſhing and fruitful. What was *Judas* the better for all thoſe heavenly ſermons,

prayers, and diſcourſes of Chriſt which he heard? and what will thy ſoul be the better for all the duties thou performeſt weekly and daily if thy heart be unſound? It's plain from *Joh.* 15. 4. there muſt be an implantation into Chriſt, before there can be an improvement in fruitful obedience. And it is as plain from 1 *John* 2. 14. that the virtues of the ordinances muſt remain, the efficacy and powers that we ſometimes feel under them, muſt abide and remain in the heart afterwards; or we cannot grow, and be made fruitful by them.

But the falſe profeſſour is neither rooted in Chriſt by union with him, nor doth or can retain the vertue of ordinances within him; but like one that views his face in a glaſs quickly forgets what manner of man he was: his head indeed may grow, his knowledge may increaſe, but he hath a dead and withered heart.

But as the Saints have real Communion with God in duties, ſo they do make improvements anſwerable thereunto: there is moſt certainly a ripening of their graces that way; a changing or gradual tranſformation from glory to glory; a ſpringing up to that full ſtature of the man in Chriſt.

Chriſt. *They that are planted in the houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the Courts of our God*, Pſal. 92. 13, 14. There is pure and ſincere milk in the breaſts of ordinances: a believer ſucks the very breaſts of Chriſt in his duties, and doth grow thereby, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. they do grow more and more judicious, experienced, humble, mortified, and heavenly, by converſing with the Lord ſo frequently in his appointments.

There is I confeſs a more diſcernable growth and ripening in ſome Chriſtians, than in others: the faith of ſome groweth exceedingly, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 3. others more ſlowly, *Heb.* 5. 12. but yet there are improvements of grace in all upright ones: habits are more deeply radicated, or fruits of obedience more increaſed.

Obj. *If any upright ſoul be ſtumbled at this, as not being able to diſcern the increaſe of his graces after all his duties.*

Sol. Let ſuch conſider, the growth of grace is diſcerned as the growth of plants is, which we perceive rather *Creviſſe, quàm creſcere*: to have grown, than to grow: compare time paſt and preſent, and you may ſee it: but uſually our eager deſires after more, make us over-look what we have as nothing.

9. Ninthly, The *assistances* and influences of the spirit in duties, shews us what we are: no vital sanctifying influences can fall upon carnal hearts in duties. The spirit helps not their infirmities, nor makes intercession for them with groanings which cannot be uttered, as he doth for his own people: *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. they have his assistances in the way of common *gifts*, but not in the way of special *grace*: he may enable them to preach *judiciously*, not *experimentally*: to pray orderly and *neatly*, not *feelingly*, believingly, and broken-heartedly: *for as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God*, Rom. 8. 14. he never so assists, but where he hath first sanctified. Carnal men furnish the materials of their duties out of the strength of their parts; a strong *memory*, a good *invention*, are the fountains whence they draw.

But it is otherwise with souls truly gracious: they have ordinarily a threefold assistance from the spirit in reference to their duties.

First, Before duties, *exciting* them to it; making them feel their need of it: like the call of an empty stomach: Psal. 27. 8. *Thou saidst, Seek my face:*

my

my heart answered, Thy face Lord will I seek.

Secondly, In their duties, furnishing both matter and affection; as in that text lately cited, *Rom.* 8. 26. guiding them not only *what* to ask, but *how* to ask.

Thirdly, after their duties, helping them not only to suppress the pride and vanity of their spirits, but also to wait on God for the accomplishment of their desires.

Now though all these things wherein the sincerity of our hearts is tryed in duties be found in great variety (as to degrees) among Saints, yet they are mysteries unknown by experience to other men.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Opening the Tryals of ſincerity and hypocriſie by ſufferings upon the account of Religion.

SECT. I.

WE are now arrived at the laſt tryal of grace propounded, *viz.* by ſufferings for Religion.

Thouſands of Hypocrites embarque themſelves in the profeſſion of Religion in a Calm; but if the wind riſeth, and the ſea rageth, and they ſee Religion will not tranſport them ſafely to the *Cape* of their earthly hopes and expectations; they deſire to be landed again aſſoon as may be, for they never intended to ride out a ſtorm for Chriſt: ſo you find Matth. 13. 20, 21. *He dureth for awhile, but when tribulation or perſecution ariſeth becauſe of the word, by and by he is offended.*

But

But yet it is not every Tryal by ſufferings that ſeparates gold from droſs, and therefore my buſineſs will be to ſhew,

1. Firſt, When the fire of ſufferings and perſecution is hot and vehement enough to ſeparate them.

2. Secondly, Why it muſt needs diſcover hypocriſie when it is at that height.

3. Thirdly, What advantages ſincere Grace hath to endure that ſevere and ſharp tryal.

SECT. II.

1. NOw the fire of perſecution or ſufferings for Religion may be judged intenſe and high enough to ſeparate gold and droſs.

Firſt, When Religion expoſes us to eminent hazard of our deepeſt and dearеſt intereſts in this world. Such are our liberties, eſtates, and lives: now 'tis a fierce and fiery tryal indeed. Sometimes it expoſes the liberties of its profeſſours, Revel. 2. 10. *The devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon*: ſometimes their eſtates: Heb. 10. 34. *ye took joyfully the ſpoiling of your goods*; and ſometimes their lives,

Heb.

Heb. 11. 37. *They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, they were ſlain with the ſword.* Whileſt it goes no higher than ſome ſmall inconveniencies of life, reputation and ſenſe of honour will hold a falſe heart; but when it comes to this, few will be found able to endure it, but thoſe that expect to ſave no more by Religion but their ſouls, and account themſelves in good caſe if they can but ſave them with the loſs of all that is dear to them in this world.

Here the falſe heart boggles, here it uſually jades, and faulters.

Secondly, The fiery Tryal is then high, when there remains no viſible hopes of deliverance or outward incouragements to ſenſe, that the *ſcene* will alter: when *we ſee not our ſigns, there is no more any prophet; nor any that can tell us how long*, as the caſe with the *Church* was in *Pſal.* 74. 9. then their hands hang down, and their hearts faint: nor is it to be wondred at, when the length of troubles proves ſo ſore a temptation even to the upright to put forth their hands to iniquity, as it is *Pſal.* 125. 3. if ſuch a temptation ſhake ſuch men as build on the rock, it muſt quite over-turn thoſe whoſe

whoſe foundation is but ſand.

Thirdly, When a falſe profeſſour is engaged alone in ſufferings, and is ſingled out from the herd as a *deer* to be run down: now it's a thouſand to one but he quits Religion to ſave himſelf: good company will encourage a faint-hearted *traveller* to jogg on a great way: but if he be forſaken by all, as *Paul* was, no man to ſtand by him if left alone, as *Elijah* was, what can encourage him to hold out?

Indeed if they had the ſame inviſible ſupports thoſe good men had, that the Lord was with them, that would keep them ſteady: but wanting that incouragement from within, and all ſhrinking away from without; they quickly tyre downright.

Fourthly, When near relations and intimates oppoſe and tempt us. The Prophet ſpeaks of a time when *a mans enemies ſhall be the men of his own houſe*, it may be the wife of his boſome, *Mica.* 7. 5, 6. O what a tryal is that which Chriſt mentions in *Luke* 14. 26. when we muſt hate father and mother, wife and children, or quit claim to Chriſt and heaven! This is hard work indeed.

How hard did that truly noble and renowned

nowned *Galeacius Caracciolus* find this! O what a conflict found he in his bowels! Now Christ and our deareſt intereſt come to meet like two men upon a narrow bridge, if one go forward, the other muſt go back, and now the predominant intereſt can no longer be concealed.

Fifthly, When powerful temptations are mixed with cruel ſufferings, when we are ſtrongly tempted, as well as cruelly perſecuted; this blows up the fire to a vehement height. This was the tryal of thoſe precious primitive believers, Heb. 11. 35, 37. *They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, they were tempted:* here was life, liberty and preferment ſet upon one hand; and death in the moſt formidable ſhape upon the other. This cannot but be a great tryal to any: but eſpecially when a cruel death, and tender temper meet; then the tryal goes high indeed.

SECT.

SECT. III.

2. AND that ſuch ſufferings as theſe will diſcover the falſeneſs and rottenneſs of mens hearts cannot be doubted, if you conſider that this is the fire deſigned by God for this very uſe and purpoſe to ſeparate the *gold* from the *droſs*, ſo you will find it, 1 Pet. 4. 12. *Beloved think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery tryal, which is to try you*, (*i. e.*) the very deſign and aim of providence in permitting and ordering them is to try you. The deſign of *Satan* is to *deſtroy* you, but Gods deſign is to *try* you. Upon this account you find the hour of perſecution (in a ſuitable notion) call'd *the hour of temptation*, or probation, *Rev.* 3. 10. for then profeſſours are ſifted to the very bran: ſearched to the very bottom principles. This is *the day that burns as an Oven, in which all the proud, and all that do wickedly ſhall be as ſtubble*, Mal. 4. 1. for,

1. Firſt, In that day the predominant intereſt muſt appear, and be diſcovered: it can be concealed no longer, *no man can*

ſerve

ſerve two maſters, ſaith Chriſt, *Luke* 16. 13. a man may ſerve many maſters, if they all command the ſame things, or things ſubordinate to each other; but he cannot ſerve two maſters if their Commands claſh and interfere with each other; and ſuch are the commands of Chriſt and the fleſh in a ſuffering hour: *Chriſt* ſaith, *be thou faithful to the death*; the *fleſh* ſaith, *ſpare thy ſelf*, and ſecure the comforts of life. *Chriſt* ſaith, He that loveth Father, or Mother, Wife or Children, Lands or Inheritances more than me, is not worthy of me. *Fleſh* ſaith, he that will grieve and break the hearts of ſuch dear relations, and forſake when he might keep ſuch earthly accommodations, is not worthy of them.

Thus the two intereſts come in full oppoſition: and now have but patience to wait a little, and you ſhall diſcern which is predominant. A *dog* follows two men while they both walk one way; and you know not which of the two is his maſter; ſtay but a little till their path parts, and then you ſhall quickly ſee who is his maſter. So is it in this caſe.

2. Secondly, In that day ſenſible ſupports fail, and all a mans relief comes in by

by the pure and immediate actings of faith; and were it not for those reliefs, his heart would soon faint and dye away under discouragements, 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18. *We faint not, whilest we look not at the things which are seen, for they are Temporal; but at the things which are not seen, for they are Eternal: q. d.* longer than we keep our eye intently fixed upon the invisible and eternal things in the coming world; we feel our selves fainting, and dying away under the troubles and afflictions of this world. *I had fainted* (saith *David*) *if I had not believed.* How then suppose ye shall the *Hypocrite* live at such a time, who hath no faith to support him? no relief but what comes in through his senses?

3. Thirdly, In that day all meer Notions and Speculations about Religion vanish, and nothing relieves and satisfies the suffering soul, but what it really believes, and what it hath satisfying proof and experience of *in himself*. There are a great many pretty pleasing notions with which our minds are entertained with some delight in times of peace, which can do us no service at all in the day of trouble: and for our speculative unpractical know-

ledge

ledge of the greateſt truths in Religion, as little ſervice is to be expected from them. Except we have better evidence and ſecurity about them, we ſhall be loth to venture all upon the credit of them: that's a very conſiderable paſſage to this purpoſe in Heb. 10. 34. *Ye took joyfully the ſpoiling of your goods,* [*knowing in your ſelves*] *that ye have in heaven a better and more enduring ſubſtance:* this *knowing in our ſelves* is by inward ſenſible experience, taſte, and feeling, which is abundantly ſatisfying to the ſoul; and ſtands oppoſed to all that traditional knowledge we receive from others; which, as it leaves the mind fluctuating, ſo the heart alſo dead and comfortleſs.

4. Fourthly, In that day the root and foundation of a mans faith and hope is tryed, and then they that have built upon the ſand muſt needs fail: for every thing is as its foundation is: principles are to us, what a root is to a tree; or a foundation to an houſe, a flaw, or grand defect there ruines all: this we find to be the very ſcope of thoſe two famous parables, *Luke* 14. 25. and *Matth.* 13. 21. leſſer troubles ſhake but the branches, but

but these tyre the root: if nothing be found there but self ends, the force of education, the influence of examples; surely when the winds rise high, and beat upon it, they will quickly lay the loftiest professour even with the ground.

And thus you see what a *Crisis* an hour of temptation, the suffering hour is, and what discoveries of *Hypocrisie* it must needs make; for now the *Hypocrite* like *Orpha* will forsake Religion, but sincerity will make the soul cleave to it, as *Ruth* did to *Naomi*.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

3. WHat advantages ſincerity gives the ſoul for its eſtabliſhment and perſeverance in ſuffering times, I ſhall briefly account for in the following particulars.

1. Firſt, Sincere godlineſs dethrones that *Idol* the love of this world, in all true Chriſtians; and this is it that makes men ſhrink and flinch from Chriſt in a day of ſuffering. I do not deny but even believers themſelves love the world too much, but they love it not as their chief good; it is not their portion or happineſs, if any man ſo love the world, *the love of the father is not in him*, 1 Joh. 2. 15. how much ſoever a ſincere Chriſtian loves the world, yet ſtill it is in ſubordination to the love of God, *Joh.* 21. 15. Sincerity can conſiſt with no other love of the world; it will not ſuffer ſuch a curſed plant to grow under its ſhadow.

Now, what is it but this inordinate ſupream love of the Creature that makes men forſake Chriſt in time of temptation?

on? this was the ruine of that young man, Matth. 19. 22. *he went away ſorrowful, for he had great poſſeſſions.* This was the overthrow of *Demas*, 2 Tim. 4. 10. *he hath forſaken me* (ſaith the *Apoſtle*) *having loved this preſent world:* the love of this world like ſap in green wood will not ſuffer you to burn for Chriſt; get but the heart mortified to the creature, by a diſcovery of better things in heaven; and it will eſtabliſh and fix your ſpirits, that it ſhall not be in the power of creatures to ſhake you off from Chriſt your foundation.

2. Secondly, Sincerity knits the ſoul to Chriſt, and union with him ſecures us in the great tryals: *munimur quatenus unimur.* The Hypocrite having no union with Chriſt, can have no communion from him; nor communications of grace with him; and ſo that little ſtock of his own being quickly ſpent, (I mean natural courage and reſolution) and no incomes from Chriſt, he muſt needs give up in a ſhort time; but it is with a believer in a day of trouble, as it is with a *Gariſon* beſieged by Land, but free and open to the Sea; whence freſh ſupplies are daily ſent in to relieve it: ſee 2 Cor. 1. 5. *as the ſuf-*

ferings

ferings of Chriſt abound in us, ſo our conſolation alſo aboundeth by Chriſt: freſh aides and daily ſupplyes proportionable to our expences, and decays of ſtrength. So Col. 1. 11. *Strengthened with all might in the inner man, according to his glorious power; unto all patience, and long-ſuffering with joyfulneſs*: and this is the believers great advantage by his union with Chriſt in a day of tryal.

3. Thirdly, As ſincerity unites the ſoul with Chriſt, ſo it ſets the heart upon heaven and things eternal, *Col.* 3. 1, *&c.* ſurely nothing is more conducive to our ſtability than this, in the hour of temptation.

This is the moſt effectual preſervative from temptations upon the right hand, and upon the left. *Moſes* could caſt a Kingdom at his heels, deſpiſe the riches, pleaſures and honours of *Egypt*, whileſt his eye was fixed upon him that is inviſible; and had reſpect to the recompence of reward, *Heb.* 11. 24, 25, 26. And it was a brave reply of the *Forty Martyrs* to *Valence* the *Emperour*, tempting them with the preferments and honours of the world; *Why offer you theſe trifles to us, when you know the whole world is contemned by*

by us? And for temptations on the left hand, how little can they move that soul, who realizes the glory of the approaching world, and sees the afflictions and sufferings of this world preparing him for, and hastening him to the enjoyment of it? temptations meet but with cold entertainment from such souls.

4. Fourthly, Sincerity drives but one design, and that is to please and enjoy God; and what can more establish and fix the soul in the hour of temptations than this? The reason why the Hypocrite is unstable in all his wayes is given us by the Apostle *James* 1. 8. he is a double minded man δίψυχος ἀνὴρ a man of two souls in one body; as a prophane wretch once boasted, that he had one soul for God, another for any thing: but all the designs of a gracious heart, are united in one: and so the intire stream of his affections runs strong.

'Tis base by-ends and self-interests that like a great many ditches cut out of the bank of a River, draw away the stream out of its proper Chanel, and make its waters fail: but if the heart be united for God as the expression is,

Pſal. 86. 11. then we may ſay of ſuch a *Chriſtian*, as was ſaid of a young *Roman*, *quicquid vult, valdè vult:* what he doth, is done with all his might. And this was the ground of that ſaying, *liberet me Deus ab homine unius tantùm negotii:* a man of one only deſign puts to all his ſtrength to carry it: nothing can ſtand before him.

5. Fifthly, Sincerity brings a mans will into ſubjection to the will of God; and this being done, the greateſt danger and difficulty is over with ſuch a man. This is that holy oyle which makes the wheels of the ſoul run nimbly even in difficult paths of obedience, *non tarda unctæ rota.* Let but a man be once brought to that, *The will of the Lord be done*; as it is, *Acts* 21. 13. to ſee the higheſt reaſon of cheerful obedience in the holy, juſt and good will of God; and then the difficulty is over: he can ſuffer *quietly*, what men inflict *unjuſtly.*

6. Sixthly, Sincerity takes its meaſures of preſent things by the rules of faith, and eternity: it goes not by the ſame reckoning and account that others do, who

who judge of things by ſenſe, and the reſpects they have to the preſent world: 2 Cor. 4. 18. *We look not at the things that are ſeen, but at the things that are not ſeen*; and this is there given as the reaſon of his not fainting under preſent difficulties: ſo Rom. 8. 18. *I reckon that the ſufferings of the preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us:* he will not allow himſelf to undervalue eternal glory by once mentioning preſent ſufferings, in a way of bemoaning himſelf for them: a ſteady eye upon the other world makes us more than Conquerours over the troubles of this world.

7. Seventhly, To conclude, Sincerity alone hath all the heavenly aids and aſſiſtances to ſtability and perſeverance in ſuffering times. Upright ones (and ſuch only) have Chriſts *interceſſion* in heaven for them, *Rom.* 8. 34. The ſpirits *conſolation* in all their troubles, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. the ſpirit of glory and of God reſteth on them: the beneficial *miniſtry of Angels*, who are ſent forth upon their account, Heb. 1. 14. *A ſtock of prayers* going for them all the world over, *Eph.*

6. 18. Multitudes of *precious promiſes* in the Scriptures, for every line, word and ſyllable of which the faithfulneſs of God ſtands engaged: ſo that it's impoſſible ſuch gold can periſh in the fire.

And thus of the ſeveral wayes by which grace is here tryed.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Opening the deſigns and ends of God in bringing of the profeſſours of Religion into ſuch various Tryals of their graces in this world.

SECT. I.

THeſe are ſome of the wayes and methods in which God brings his Gold to the Touchſtone, and to the fire; even in this world; before the awful and ſolemn Tryal they muſt come to in the final Judgement. And if we deſire to be ſatisfied what the deſign and end of God in making ſuch probations of his people is,

We muſt conclude in the general, he certainly deſigns his own glory, and his peoples advantage, and profit in them. If he ſuffer them to be tryed by reproaches, *happy are they, the ſpirit of God and glory reſteth on them*; there's their *profit*; and though his name be evil ſpoken, yet in

the meekneſs of their ſpirits, *he is glorified*, as it is 1 Pet. 4. 14. *If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he langheth at the tryal of the innocent*, Job 9. 23. not at their afflictions, but at the effects and bleſſed iſſues and reſults of them: not that it gives them *pain*, but that it gives him *glory*: upon this account the *Apoſtle* bids us count it all Joy when we fall into divers temptations or tryals: and ſtill the more tryals the more Joy; for thereby God will produce ſuch effects as are more precious than gold that periſheth, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. O who can value the comfort that is taſted by the ſoul upon the Tryal and diſcovery of its ſincerity! when after ſome ſore temptation, wherein God hath helped us to maintain our integrity; or after ſome cloſe pinching affliction, wherein we have diſcovered in our ſelves a ſweet reſignation to, and contentment in the will of God; an heart cleaving to the Lord, purged and made more ſpiritual under the rod; we can turn to the Lord, and appeal to him as the Prophet did, Jer. 12. 3. *But thou O Lord knoweſt me, thou haſt ſeen me, and tryed mine heart towards thee.*

I ſay

I ſay who can duly value ſuch an advantage, who would exchange ſuch a comfort for all the gold and ſilver in the world! how many tryals ſoever God brings his people under, to be ſure neither his own glory nor their intereſt ſhall ſuffer any damage by them.

SECT. IX.

But more particularly, Let us bring our thoughts cloſe to the matter before us; and we ſhall find many great advantages and benefits riſing out of theſe Tryals of ſincerity; for,

1. Firſt, Hereby Hypocriſie is unmasked and diſcovered; The vizard is pluckt off from the falſe profeſſour, and his true natural face and complexion ſhewn to the world; and in this there is a great deal of good.

Object. *Good, you will ſay, where lyes it? all the world ſees the miſchief and ſad effects of it; many are ſtumbled, many are hardned by it, woe to the world becauſe of offences,* Matth. 16. 7.

Sol. True, ſome are prejudiced and hardened by it, ſo as never to have good thoughts of the wayes and people of God more; that's ſad indeed, however herein God accompliſhes his word, and executeth his decree. And though theſe periſh; yet

Firſt, Others are warned, awakened, and ſet a ſearching their own hears more narrowly than ever; and this is good: 1 *Cor.* 10. 11, 12. now theſe were our examples, *wherefore let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall.*

Secondly, Hereby ſin is ſhamed, and it is good when ſin that hath expoſed men to ſo much ſhame, ſhall be it ſelf expoſed to ſhame. This is the juſt reward of ſin, Jer. 13. 25, 26. *This is thy lot, the portion of thy meaſures from me, ſaith the Lord; becauſe thou haſt forgotten me, and truſted in falſhood, therefore will I diſcover thy skirts upon thy face that thy ſhame may appear.*

The turning up the skirt is a modeſt expreſſion of expoſing a perſon to the greateſt ſhame: in the day of Tryal God by diſcovering hypocriſie ſhames the hypocrite: and ſurely many ſuch diſcoveries are made of men at this day; we may ſee ſin that lurked cloſe in the heart before,

before, now laid open before all *Israel* and before the Sun.

Thirdly, Hereby the poor self-couzening hypocrite hath the greatest opportunity and advantage that ever was before him in all his life, to recover himself out of the snare of the Devil: now all his pretences are gone: now that which like a shield was advanced against the arrows of reproof and conviction is gone: now a poor creature stands naked and stript out of all his pleas as a fair and open mark to the word, and his own conscience; and happy will it be for him if now the Lord make conviction to enter point-blank into his soul: all these are blessed effects of the discovery of Hypocrisie.

2. Secondly, By these tryals integrity is cleared up, and the doubts and fears of many upright and holy ones allayed and quieted, resolved and satisfied.

O what would many a poor Christian give for satisfaction in that great point of sincerity! how many tears have been shed to God in secret upon that account? how many hours have been spent in examination of his own heart about it, and still jealousies and fears hang upon his heart? he doubts what he may prove at last:

Well, saith God, let his sincerity then come to the test; kindle the fire and cast in my gold. Tryals are the high way to assurance: let my child see that he loves me more than these, that his heart is upright with me. I will try him by prosperity and by adversity; by persecutions and temptations; and he shall see his heart is better than he suspects it to be. This shall be the day of resolution to his fears and doubts.

The Apostle speaking of Heresies, 1 *Cor.* 11. 7, 9. puts a necessity upon them. *There must be Heresies* (saith he) *that they which are approved may be made manifest.* The same necessity there is (and for the same end) of all other tryals of grace, that the lovely beautiful sweet face of sincerity may be opened sometimes to the world to enamour them, and to the soul in whom it is, to satisfie it that it doth not personate a Christian, but lives the very life of a Christian, and hath the very spirit and principles of a Christian in him.

3. Thirdly, By these tryals pride and self-confidence is destroyed and mortified in the Saints as much as by any thing in the world: we never see what poor weak

weak creatures we are, till we come to the tryal. It's ſaid, *Deut.* 8. 2. God led *Iſrael* through the deſart to prove them and to humble them: when we are *proved*, then we are *humbled*. Thoſe that over-reckon their graces before the tryal, ſee they muſt come to another account and take new meaſures of themſelves after they have been upon tryal.

Ah! little did I think, ſaith, one that I had ſo much love for the world, and ſo little for God, till afflictions tryed it. I could not have believed that ever the creature had got ſo deep into my heart, till providence either threatned or made a ſeparation, and then I found it. I thought I had been rich in faith, till ſuch a danger befel me; or ſuch a want began to pinch hard; and then I ſaw how unable I was to truſt God for protection, or proviſion. O it's a good thing that our hearts be kept humble and lowly, how rich ſoever they be in grace.

4. Fourthly, By tryals grace is kept in exerciſe, and the gracious ſoul preſerved from ſecurity and ſpiritual ſlothfulneſs: tryals are to grace what the eſtuations and continual agitations of the waters are to the ſea: or what the racking of

Wines

Wines from the Lees is to it: were it not for our frequent tryals and exerciſes, we ſhould quickly ſettle upon the Lees; and our duties would be (as God complains of *Ephraim*) like ſowre or dead drink, *Hoſ.* 4. 18. flat, and ſpiritleſs. *Moab hath been at eaſe from his youth, and he hath ſettled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from veſſel to veſſel; neither hath he gone into Captivity; therefore his taſte remained in him, and his ſcent is not changed,* Jer. 48. 11.

Much after that rate it would be with our hearts, did not the Lord frequently try and exerciſe them: let the beſt man be without ſome tryal or other but a few moneths, and you may find the want of it in his prayers and conferences quickly. O what a tang of formality will be found in them! and is it for the honour of God or profit of his people that it ſhould be ſo? no, no, the Lord knows it is not; but how ſhall their ſpirits be reduced to the former zealous heavenly temper again; why, ſaith the Lord, they muſt into the Furnace again. *I will melt them and try them, for how ſhall I do for the daughter of my people!* Jer. 9. 7. I love them too well to loſe them for want of a rod:

rod: alas! if I ſhould ſuffer things to go on at this rate, what will become of them in a little time? what delight can I take in their duties! when the faith, fervour, humility, and holy ſerioufneſs of their ſpirits is wanting in them? I will therefore *refine them as ſilver is refined, and try them as gold is tryed; and they ſhall call upon my name, and I will hear them; and I will ſay it is my people; and they ſhall ſay the Lord is my God,* Zech. 13. 9. and thus the Lord chides himſelf friend again with his people.

Thus he recovers them to their true temper, and thus his viſitations do preſerve their ſpirits: and when the Lord ſees theſe ſweet effects of his tryals upon them, it greatly pleaſeth him. O now ſaith God I like it. This providence hath done them good, this rod was well beſtowed, the letting looſe of this temptation or that corruption upon them, hath made them find their knees again, now I hear the voice of my child again.

Beloved, this is a bleſſed fruit and effect of our frequent tryals, and how ungrateful ſoever they are to fleſh and blood that affects eaſe and is loth to be diſturbed;

bed; yet it is necessary to the preservation of our spirits.

5. Fifthly, By the tryal of our graces *Satan* is defeated, and his accusations of the Saints found to be meer slanders. It is a very common thing with the *devil* and wicked men to accuse the people of God of Hypocrisie, and to tell the world they are not the men and women they are taken to be; and that if their inside were but turned out by some through tryal, or deep search, it would appear that Religion did not indeed live in their souls as they pretend; but that they only act a part, and personate heavenly and mortified persons upon the publick stage of profession.

Thus the Accuser of the brethren suggests the Hypocrisie of *Job*, Cap. 2. 5. *put forth thine hand now and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. q. d.* Well might *Job* serve thee, whilest thou hast been so bountiful a master to him; he hath been well rewarded for all the service he hath done thee; but if thou stop the current of his prosperity, thou shalt see how quickly he will stop the course of his duty: a few lashes from thy hand,

hand, will make him curſe thee to thy face: but O what ſhame and diſappointment was it to that envious ſpirit, what a vindication of *Jobs* integrity, when under the greateſt tryals of his faith and patience, he ſtill held faſt his integrity, and ſhews himſelf as great a pattern of patience under the croſs, as he had been of piety in the dayes of his greateſt proſperity! Satan gets nothing by bringing forth the Saints upon the ſtage, to be made a ſpectacle to angels and men, as it is, 1 *Cor.* 4. 9.

6. Sixthly and Laſtly, The frequent tryals of grace exhibit a full and living Teſtimony againſt the Atheiſm of the world. Theſe prove beyond all words or arguments that Religion is no fancy, but the greateſt reality in the world: men would make Religion but a fancy, and the zeal of its profeſſours, but the intemperate heat of ſome crazy brains, overheated with a fond notion.

They that never felt the real influences of Religion upon their own ſouls, will not believe that others do feel them. Serious piety is become the ludicrous ſubject with which the wanton Wits of this Atheiſtical world ſport themſelves. But

behold

behold the wisdom and goodness of God exhibiting to the world the undeniable testimonies of the truth of Religion, as often as the sincere professours thereof are brought to the test by afflictions from the hand of God, or persecutions from the hands of men. Loe *here is the faith and patience of the Saints:* here is the courage, meekness, and self-denyal shining as gold in the fire: they have the real proofs of it before their eyes: instead of casting them into hell, and convincing them by eternal fire, he is pleased to cast his own people into the fire of affliction, that they who scoff at them may be convinced at an easier and cheaper rate. It is no new thing to see the enemies of Religion brought over to embrace it, by the constancy and faithfulness of the Saints in their tryals and sufferings for it. God grant that the Atheism of this present generation do not occasion a more fiery tryal to the people of God in it, than they have yet suffered.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Shewing that grace only is to be reckoned ſincere and real, which can endure thoſe tryals which God appoints or permits for the diſcovery of it.

SECT. I.

BEfore I offer you the proofs and evidences of this truth, it will be neceſſary to prevent ſome miſtakes that may be occaſioned by miſunderſtanding of it.

Caution 1.

And in the firſt place, we are not to think aſſurance of our ſincerity impoſſible to be had in this life, becauſe as long as we live here we are in a ſtate of tryal; and how many tryals ſoever have been made upon us already, yet ſtill there are more to come; and we know not what we

we ſhall prove in future tryals, though God hath kept us upright in former tryals: no, no, this is none of my meaning; nor doth ſuch a concluſion neceſſarily follow this aſſertion: for a Chriſtian that hath rightly cloſed with Chriſt at firſt, and been faithful in the duties of active and paſſive obedience hitherto, may be aſſured upon good grounds of a victory before he come to the fire of his remaining tryals. So was the Apoſtle, Rom. 8. 35, &c. *who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? nay in all theſe we are more than conquerours, through him that hath loved us:* here's an aſſured triumph before the Combate. So Job 23. 10. *but he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tryed me, I ſhall come forth as gold:* he appeals to God for the ſincerity of his heart, ſo far as he had hitherto gone in the way of Religion; and thence concludes that whatever tryals God ſhould bring him to for time to come, he ſhould come forth as gold, (*i.e.*) he ſhould not loſe one grain by the fire; and this confidence of a gracious ſoul is built not only upon experience gained in former tryals, but upon

upon faith in the *power*, *promiſes*, and *faithfulneſs* of God which are engaged for him in the Covenant of grace, to keep him in the greateſt dangers that befal him in this world.

He believes the power of God is able to make him ſtand, though he hath no power nor might in himſelf to overcome the leaſt temptation, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. you are kept φρουρουμένους, (kept as with a garriſon) by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation: when Chriſt hath once taken poſſeſſion of the ſoul by his ſpirit, he fortifies it by his power as a garriſon, that uſing the means, it be ſurprized or betrayed no more into the enemies hand, ſo as finally to be loſt.

He builds this confidence alſo upon the *promiſes* of God, which are his ſecurity in all future dangers: and how are all the pages of the Bible beſpangled with ſuch promiſes, as the firmament is with bright and glorious ſtars! ſuch are theſe of the firſt magnitude, 1 Cor. 1. 8, 9. *Chriſt ſhall confirm you to the end, that ye may be blameleſs in the day of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; God is faithful by whom ye are called into the fellowſhip of his Son Jeſus*

Jeſus Chriſt our Lord: and no leſs ſatiſfying and ſweet is that, Jer. 32. 40. *And I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me:* and of the ſame nature is that alſo, John 10. 27, 28. *My ſheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they ſhall never periſh: neither ſhall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

If there be any *Hypocrite* in *ſheeps cloathing*, he hath no part nor lot in this promiſe; but it ſecures the whole flock of Chriſt, great and ſmall, againſt all danger.

He alſo builds his aſſurance upon the faithfulneſs of God, which ſtands engaged to make good every line, word and ſyllable of his promiſes to his people: ſo we find it in 1 Cor. 10. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you but ſuch as is common to man; but God is faithful; who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with every temptation make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it:* and 2 Theſ. 3. 3. *but the Lord*

is

is faithful, who ſhall ſtabliſh you, and keep your from evil.

Add to this the conſtant prevalent interceſſion of Chriſt in Heaven for his people in all their tryals, and then you will ſee a ſincere Chriſtian need not to deny himſelf the joy and comfort of his aſſurance upon the account and ſuppoſition of his future tryals.

SECT. II.

Caution 2.

NOr do we here ſuppoſe in this aſſertion, that inherent grace in the Saints hath a ſufficiency of ability in it ſelf to endure the greateſt and ſevereſt tryals that can befall it in this world. It is certain that it ſhall be carryed ſafely through all, but not in its own ſtrength and ability.

That is a true obſervation of the learned *Gerſon : perfectiones ſibi relictæ, ſunt pondera ad ruinam :* the moſt perfect creature left to it ſelf will fall into ruine. This

This was exemplified in the *Angels* that fell, and in *Adam*, though in a perfect ſtate: divine preſervation is the prop which ſupports the beſt creatures from ruine. Grace it ſelf is but a creature, and therefore a dependent being: it is but a ſtream, and depends upon the ſupply of the fountain; if the fountain let not forth it ſelf, what becomes of the ſtream? That's a true and judicious obſervation of the learned Dr. *Ames*; *Perſeverantia fidelium, vel immutabilis eorum conditio ſecundum integram ejus rationem, non pervenit à principio intrinſeco ſolo, nec à ſolo extrinſeco; ſed partim ab intrinſeco, ex naturâ vitæ ſpiritualis à Chriſto fluentis: & partim ab extrinſeco, ex cuſtodia, protectione, & directione Dei:* Anteſi Coronis Art. 5. The perſeverance of believers, or the immutability of their condition, if we view the whole ground and reaſon of it, is not wholly from within, nor wholly from without it ſelf: but partly from the nature of the ſpiritual life which flows from Chriſt into them; and partly from the keeping, protection and direction of God. That protection is alwayes afforded to this life of grace,

and

and this life of grace alwayes needs that protection. The beſt of men are but men at beſt, as one ſpeaks: it was not *Peters* grace and reſolution that kept him, but Chriſts care of him and interceſſion for him, Luke 22. 32. *Be ſtrong in the Lord,* (ſaith the *Apoſtle*) *and in the power of his might,* Epheſ. 6. 10. *Without me* (ſaith *Chriſt*) *you can do nothing,* John 15. 5.

Neither of theſe is that which I have before me to prove, but this is that which I aim at; That ſuch ſeeming grace as was never yet brought to the tryal, nor will be able to bear the tryal when God ſhall bring it thereto; muſt not paſs for current (as too frequently it doth) among us; ſuch grace will neither comfort us now, nor ſave us hereafter: for,

SECT.

SECT. III.

1. FIrſt, Great numbers of perſons in the profeſſing world are deceived and deſtroyed by truſting to ſeeming and untried grace. This was the miſerable condition of theſe *Laodicean profeſſours* in the Text: they reckoned themſelves rich, but were really poor: all is not gold that gliſters: their gold (as they accounted it) was never tryed in the fire: if a mans whole eſtate lay in ſome precious ſtone, ſuppoſe a rich *Diamond*, how is he concerned to have it throughly tryed? to ſee whether it will bear a ſmart ſtroke with the hammer, or fly like a *Briſtol* Diamond under it? All that you are worth lyes in the truth and ſincerity of your grace: and till that be tryed you know not whether you be worth any thing or nothing.

Reader, There are two ſad ſights in the world, which cannot but deeply affect every upright heart: one is to ſee ſo many thouſands of rational and ingenious

ous men in the *Romiſh Church* by an implicite faith in their guides, venturing their ſouls upon their bare word, never ſearching the Scriptures with their own eyes, but wholly truſting to the infallibility of the *Pope*, or a *Council*; when in the mean time, they would fear to take their word for a ſum of money without ſome farther ſecurity. It is amazing to behold the ſoul-deſtroying, eaſie credulity of theſe men: but this is a ſtroke of madneſs and ſpiritual infatuation judicially inflicted upon them; that the judgement which is written might be fulfilled in them, *God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions that they ſhould believe a lye*, 2 Theſ. 2. 11.

And yet more amazing is that ſtroke of God upon multitudes of vain and formal profeſſours even in the Reformed Proteſtant Churches; where no man is reſtrained from ſearching the Scriptures; nay, where men are ſo frequently and earneſtly preſſed from Sabbath to Sabbath to examine themſelves, and prove their own work, that yet ſo many are content to leave all at hazard; and without any more ado or farther ſearch in

the matter, credit the report of their own deceiful hearts, and take all for granted without due tryal or examination of the matter.

Surely no one thing ſends down more ſouls daily to hell out of the profeſſing world, than this doth. The five fooliſh Virgins (*i. e.* the unprincipled Profeſſours in the Reformed Churches) periſhed this way. They took it for granted all was well, becauſe they had lamps of profeſſion as well as others; and ſaw not the cheat, till the cry was heard at midnight, and their unfurniſhed Lamps went out, *Matth.* 25.

2. Secondly, The promiſes of ſalvation are made over to tryed grace, and ſuch only as will endure the tryal: So James 1. 12. *Bleſſed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tryed, he ſhall receive the Crown of life which God hath promiſed to them that love him:* we muſt be firſt tryed, and then crowned. *If a man ſtrive for maſteries, yet is he not Crowned, except he ſtrive lawfully,* 2 Tim. 2. 5. he manifeſtly alludes to the *Roman Games* to which there were Judges appointed, to ſee that no foul play were offered

offered contrary to the Law for wreſtling: and where it was found, the Crown was denyed them. Not to him that ſets forth in the morning with reſolution and gallantry, but to him that holds out till the evening of his life, is the promiſe made, Matth. 10. 22. *He that endureth to the end ſhall be ſaved:* ſo Rom. 2. 7. *To them who by patient continuance in well doing ſeek for glory and honour, and immortality; eternal life:* and once more, Heb. 3. 14. *We are made partakers of Chriſt, if we hold the beginning of our confidence, ſtedfaſt unto the end.* So that if you ſhould endure ſome few ſlighter troubles, and faint at laſt; give out when a cloſer tryal befalls you; all your labours and ſufferings are in vain. Sincerity and final perſeverance are the conditions of all ſpecial promiſes.

3. Thirdly, Every mans graces and duties muſt be tryed and weighed by God in the great day; and if they cannot endure theſe leſſer tryals to which God expoſes them now, how will they endure that ſevere and exact tryal to which he will bring them then? No man can ſearch his own heart with that exact-

neſs in this world, as God will ſearch it in the world to come.

I may ſay in this caſe to you as the Lord ſpake to *Jeremiah*, cl ap. 12. 5. *If thou haſt run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee; then how canſt thou contend with horſes? and if in the land of peace wherein thou truſtedſt, they have wearied thee; then how wilt thou do in the ſwelling of Jordan?* This was ſpoken to encourage the *Prophet* to conſtancy in his work; and as if the Lord had ſaid, O *Jeremy*, do the ſtrivings of the men of *Anathoth* thine own Town, diſhearten thee? pluck up thy ſpirits and faint not; there are harder Tryals than theſe that thou muſt undergo at *Jeruſalem:* theſe are no more to what is coming, than the running with footmen, is to contending with horſes: or the paſſing a ſmall Rivulet, to the ſwellings of *Jordan*.

To allude to this, If our graces and duties cannot bear theſe lighter tryals, if a little lift of proſperity, or lighter ſtroke of adverſity diſcover ſo much falſeneſs, rottenneſs, pride, and ſelfiſhneſs in the heart: If we cannot reſiſt the motions of corruptions, but yield our ſelves to obey

obey ſin in the luſts of it : If we can neither keep our hearts with God in duties, nor mourn for our wanderings from him : If a few ſcoffs from wicked tongues, or tryals of perſecution from the hands of men will cauſe us to faint in the way, and turn back from following the Lord; what ſhall we do when he comes whoſe fan is in his hand, and who will throughly purge his floor, *Mat.* 3. 12. who will try every mans work as by fire, 1 *Cor.* 3. 13. ſearch the ſecrets of all hearts, *Rom.* 2. 16. weigh every man to his ounces and drachms? Surely we can take little comfort in that which is ſo unable to bear the ſeyere tryals of that day, that it cannot ſtand before the ſlighter Tryals of this day.

4. Fourthly, True grace is willing to be tryed, and nothing is more deſirable to an upright ſoul than to know his own condition. If therefore we ſhun the tryal, and are loth to ſearch our ſelves, or be ſearched by the Lord, our condition is ſuſpicious, and we can take little comfort in it. It was *Davids* earneſt deſire, *Pſal.* 139. 23. that God would throughly ſearch his heart and reins, and ſee if there were any way of wickedneſs in

him: falſe grace is ſhy of Gods eye; it cares not to be examined; but this is the delight of ſincere ones: *euery one that doth evil hateth the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved; but he that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifeſt that they are wrought in God,* John 3. 20, 21.

The reaſon is plain why Hypocriſie cannot endure to come to the Touchſtone and teſt, for Hypocrites having a ſecret conſciouſneſs of their own guilt and unſoundneſs, know that by this means their vain confidence would quickly be confuted, and all their reputation for Religion blaſted: but O if men dare not ſtand before the word, as it is now opened and applyed by Miniſters; how will they ſtand when it ſhall be opened and applyed in another manner by Jeſus Chriſt?

O Profeſſour, if thy condition be good, thy heart right, thou wilt deſire to know the very worſt of thy ſelf; and when thou haſt made the deepeſt ſearch thou canſt, thou wilt ſtill fear thou haſt not been ſevere enough, and impartial enough to thy ſelf: nothing will give thee more content than when thou feeleſt the word

dividing

dividing thy ſoul and ſpirit, thy joynts and marrow: nothing ſo much comforts thee under, or after an affliction, as the diſcovery it hath made of thy heart, thou wilt ſeem to feel with what affections thoſe words came from the Prophets lips, Jer. 12. 3. *But thou O Lord knoweſt me, thou haſt ſeen me, and tryed my heart towards thee.* O what a refreſhing ſweetneſs will ſtream through thy heart; and all the powers of thy ſoul, when thou canſt make the like appeal to God with like ſincerity! And certainly without ſuch a diſpoſition of ſpirit towards the tryal of our graces, we can have little evidence of the truth of them.

CHAP. XI.

Containing divers practical inſtructive Inferences from this doctrine, with a ſerious exhortation to ſelf-tryal, and through examination.

SECT. I.

Infer. 1.

First, ARe there ſuch variety of tryals appointed to examine the ſincerity of mens graces, *how great a vanity then is Hypocriſie, and to how little purpoſe do men endeavour to conceal and hide it!* We ſay, *murder* will out, and we may as confidently affirm *hypocriſie* will out. When *Rebekah* had laid the plot to dignifie her ſon *Jacob*, and by perſonating his brother to get the bleſſing; *Jacob* thus objects againſt it; *My Father peradventure will*

will feel me, and I ſhall ſeem to him as a deceiver; and I ſhall bring a curſe upon me, and not a bleſſing, Gen. 27. 12. as if he ſhould ſay; but what if my Father detect the cheat, how then ſhall I look him in the face? how ſhall I eſcape a curſe? After the ſame manner every upright ſoul ſcares it ſelf from the way of Hypocriſie. If I diſſemble, and pretend to be what I am not; my father will find me out. Ah there is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death that can conceal the Hypocrite: but out it will come at laſt, let him uſe all the art he can to hide it. Oftentimes God diſcovers him by the tryals he appoints in this world, and men in that day ſhall *return and diſcern betwixt the righteous and the wicked; betwixt him that ſerveth God and him that ſerveth him not*, Mal. 3. 18. but if he make an hard ſhift to get by a private way to hell, carrying this comfort with him to the laſt ſtep; that no body knows or thinks he is gone thither: yet there will be a day when God will ſtrip him naked before the great aſſembly of Angels and men: and all ſhall point at him and ſay,

Loe this is the man that made not God his hope: this is he that wore a garment of profeſſion to deceive, but God hath now ſtript him out of it, and all men ſee what he is: for, *there is nothing covered that ſhall not be revealed, and hid that ſhall not be known:* Matth. 10. 26. and the *Apoſtle* aſſures us, 1 Tim. 5. 24, 25. *that they that are otherwiſe cannot be hid:* if mens works be not good, it's impoſſible they ſhould be hid long: a gilded piece of braſs may paſs from hand to hand a little while; but the touchſtone will diſcover the baſe metal: if that do not, the fire will.

O ſinners, away with your Hypocriſie, be honeſt, ſincere, plain, and hearty in Religion; if not, confuſion of face ſhall ſhall be your recompence from the Lord, that is what you ſhall get by it.

Infer. 2.

Secondly, Are there ſuch tryals appointed and permitted by the Lord for the diſcovery of his peoples ſincerity in this world, *then let none of Gods people expect a quiet ſtation in this world:* certainly

tainly you ſhall meet with no reſt here: you muſt out of one fire into another, and it is a merciful condeſcenſion of the Lord to poor creatures thus to concern himſelf for their ſafety and benefit: *what is man that thou ſhouldſt magnifie him? and that thou ſhouldſt ſet thine heart upon him? that thou ſhouldſt viſit him every morning, and try him every moment?* Job 7. 17, 18.

O 'tis a great deal of honour put upon a poor worm when God will every moment try him and viſit him: it argues the great eſteem the Goldſmith hath of his gold, when he will ſit by the Furnace himſelf, and order the fire with his own hand: when he pries ſo often, and ſo curiouſly into the fining pot, to ſee that none of his precious metal upon which he ſets his heart be loſt.

Think it not then a debaſing to you to be ſo often expoſed to tryals: if God did not value you highly, he would not try you ſo frequently: what would become of you, if your condition here ſhould be more ſettled and quiet than now it is? I believe you find droſs enough in your hearts after all the fires into

into which God hath caſt you: ſurely there is filth enough in the beſt of Gods people to take all this: it may be a great deal more trouble than they have yet met with: we fancy it a brave life to live at eaſe, and if we meet with longer reſpites and intervals of tryal than uſual, we are apt to ſay we ſhall never be moved, as *David* did, *Pſal.* 30. 6. or we ſhall dye in our neſt as it is, *Job* 29. 18. our hard and difficult dayes are over, but woe to us if God ſhould give us the deſire of our hearts in this: ſee what the temper of thoſe mens ſpirits is, that meet with no changes, Pſal. 55. 19. *Becauſe they have no changes, therefore they fear not God:* O it's better to be preſerved ſweet in *brine*, than to rot in *honey*.

Infer. 3.

Thirdly, *Let none boaſt in a carnal confidence of their own ſtrength and ſtability*; you are yet in a ſtate of tryal: hitherto God hath kept you upright in all your tryals, bleſs God but boaſt not: you are but feathers in the wind of temptation if God leave you to your ſelves. *Peter* told

told Christ (and doubtless he spake no more than he honestly meant) *though all men forsake thee yet will not I:* and you know what he did when the hour of his tryal came: *Matth.* 26. 35. *Angels* left to themselves have fallen: it's better be a *humble worm*, than a *proud Angel.*

Ah how many *Pendletons* will this professing age shew, if once God bring us to the fiery tryal? let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall: you have not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin: none stand upon firmer ground, than those that see nothing in themselves to stand upon: he that leans upon his own arm, usually benumms it, and makes it useless.

Infer. 4.

Fourthly, Doth God kindle so many fires in *Sion*, and set his Furnaces in *Jerusalem* to discover and separate the dross from the gold, *how contrary are those men to God that allow, yea and prize the dross of Hypocrisie which God hates, and stick not to make the holy God a patronizer*

and

and countenancer of it in the hearts and lives of men!

It is amazing to read what Popiſh pens have impudently written about this matter. *Sylveſter* puts the queſtion whether it be a ſin to make a falſe ſhew of *ſanctity?* and anſwers it thus: If it be for the honour of God, and profit of others, it is no ſin: nay, they have a reverence for hypocriſie as an holy Art. *Vincentius* ſpends a whole Chapter in commendation of the hypocriſie of St. *Dominick*; and entitles it *de ſancta ejus hypocriſi*, (*i. e.*) of the holy hypocriſie of that Saint: reckoning it among his commendations that he had the art of diſſembling. And yet one peg higher, A Religious perſon (ſaith another) that feigns himſelf to have more holineſs than he hath, that others may be ediſied, ſins not but rather merits.

A ſum. adv. ſimulatio. n. 4.

Roſella in v. Hypocriſis. n. 1.

Bluſh O heavens! that ever ſuch factors for hell ſhould open and vend ſuch ware as this in the publick market, and invite

invite the world to Hypocriſie, as that which makes for the glory of God, the edification of men, and a work meritorious in the Hypocrite himſelf. This is the doctrine of devils indeed.

Infer. 5.

Fifthly, If it be ſo, that all grace muſt come to the teſt, and be tryed as gold in the fire, even in this world: *how are all men concerned to lay a ſolid foundation at firſt, and throughly deliberate the terms upon which they cloſe with Chriſt, and engage in the profeſſion of his name! Which of you,* ſaith *Chriſt, intending to build a Tower ſitteth not down firſt, and counteth the coſt?* Luk. 14. 28. if ſome men had ſate down at firſt and pondered the conditions and terms of Chriſt, they had not ſate down now diſcouraged and tyred in the way. The Apoſtle *Paul* went to work at another rate: he accounted all but dung and droſs for Chriſt, *Phil.* 3. 8. and was of the ſame mind, when the actual tryal came: for then he tells us, *he counted not his life dear unto him,* Acts 20. 24. And the Apoſtle *Peter* admoniſhes believers

not

not to think it ſtrange concerning the fiery tryal which was to try them, 1 Pet. 4. 21. *q. d.* let none of theſe things be ſurpriſals to you, you were told before-hand what you muſt truſt to: every Chriſtian muſt be a *Martyr*, at leaſt in the diſpoſition and reſolution of his heart.

O that men would ballance the advantages and diſadvantages of Religion, and throughly ponder the matter in their deepeſt thoughts: to the teſt you muſt come: the rain will fall, and the ſtorm beat upon your buildings, look carefully therefore to the foundations.

Infer. 6.

Sixthly and Laſtly, *Learn from this point the unavoidableneſs of ſcandals and offences in the way of Religion*; for if there be a neceſſity of tryal, there is alſo a neceſſity of ſcandal. *It muſt needs be that offences come*, Luke 17. 1. Why muſt it needs be? the reaſon is evident, all muſt come to the tryal, and all are not able to bear it. Our Lord tells us, *Matth.* 24. 8, 9, 10. of a day of great ſtraights and perplexity coming: *and then* (ſaith he) *ſhall many*

be

be offended. The day of tryal is the day of ſcandal: by theſe offences ſome are put a ſearching themſelves, and ſome fall a cenſuring all others; but the holy God brings about his end both wayes, in them that are ſaved and in them that periſh.

SECT. II.

WEll then, if it be ſo that all muſt into the furnace, let every man try his own work. Examine your ſelves, profeſſours, ſearch your hearts, commune with your reins: nothing more concerns you in all the world than this doth. O that you would be more in your cloſets, and oftner upon your knees: O that you would look into the Bible, then into your hearts; and then to God; ſaying with *David, ſearch me O God and know my heart; prove me, and try my reins; and ſee if there be any way of iniquity in me:* never did Religion thrive in the world ſince mens heads have been ſo over-heated with Notions and Controverſies, and their hearts ſo ſenſibly cooled in their cloſet

cloſet work. I have elſewhere more largely preſſed this duty upon the profeſſours of this generation, and thither ſhall referr the Reader for preſent to ſee the neceſſity and importance of this work.

See my *Saint indeed*, *p.* 191, 192, 193, &c.

Here I ſhall only urge the duty of ſelf-tryal by ſome preſſing Motives, and awakening Conſiderations.

Motive 1.

And the firſt ſhall be the exceeding difficulty of this work: difficulty in ſome caſes may be a diſcouragement, but where the matter is of abſolute neceſſity as it is here; nothing provokes more to diligence: *ſtrive* (ſaith our Lord) *to enter in at the ſtrait gate, for many will ſeek to enter in and ſhall not be able*, Luke 13. 24. A double difficulty is found attending this work of ſelf-tryal. Difficulty in bringing the heart to it, and difficulty in the right and ſucceſsful management of it: who finds it not hard to perſwade his heart to ſuch work as this? nature declines it, fleſh and blood reliſh it

it not: it's one of the great ſeverities in Religion: 'tis no eaſie thing to bring a man and his own heart together.

It is in this caſe as in the ſtudy of *Geography*, we are more inquiſitive to know, and delighted when we diſcover the rarities of forraign Countreys, and ſtrange things in the remote parts of the world; than thoſe of our own native Countrey. I fear there be many profeſſours of Religion that can ſpend day after day in hearing, and love to be diſputing fruitleſs controverſies, that never ſpent one day in ſearching what influence all thoſe Sermons they have heard, have had upon their hearts, or in rightly ſtating and determining that great Controverſie, in whoſe right and poſſeſſion their ſouls are, and which way they ſhall go aſſoon as death hath divided them from thoſe mortal bodyes; yea, I doubt many ſinful hours are ſpent in prying into, reporting and cenſuring the failings of others, and not one hour faithfully imployed in judging their own hearts before the Lord: O men had rather be about any other work than this; there's no pleaſure in it to the fleſh.

And

And yet how difficult ſoever it be to bring our hearts to the work, it's certainly much more difficult to manage it ſucceſsfully, and bring the great queſtion of our ſincerity to a clear reſult and iſſue. O how many upright hearts have ſate cloſe to this work many a year, and lifted up many a cry to heaven, and ſhed many a ſecret and undiſſembled tear about it; and yet ſtill are in the dark, and their minds greatly perplext, and fill'd with fear about it: what would they not do, what would they not ſuffer? what pleaſant enjoyment would they not gladly part with to arrive at the deſire of their ſouls, the full aſſurance of their ſincerity! It was the ſaying of a pious woman, I have born (ſaid ſhe) ſeven Children, and they have coſt me as dear as ever Children did coſt a Mother; yet would I be content to endure all that ſorrow over again, to be aſſured of the love of God to my ſoul.

Motive 2.

Secondly, And as the work is full of difficulty, ſo the diſcovery of your ſincerity will be full of ſweetneſs, and joy unſpeakable: it will never repent you that you have prayed and mourned, that you have trembled and feared, that you have ſearched and tryed: nay, it will never repent you that God hath tryed you by thouſands of ſharp afflictions and deep ſufferings; if after all, your ſincerity may be fully cleared up to the ſatisfaction of your ſouls: for in the ſame day your ſincerity ſhall be cleared, your title to Chriſt will be made as clear to your ſouls as your ſincerity is: you may then go to the promiſes boldly, and take your own Chriſt into the armes of your faith and ſay, *my beloved is mine, and I am his:* yea, you may be confident it ſhall be well with you in the Judgement of the great day, for *God will not caſt away the upright man*, Job 8. 20. if the word clear you now, it cannot condemn you then.

O what an eaſe is it to the ſoul when the fears and doubts that hanged about it

it are gone ! when a man ſees what he is, and what he hath in Chriſt and the promiſes; and what he hath to do; even to ſpend the time betwixt this and Heaven in admiring the grace of God that hath delivered him from the ruining miſtakes and miſcarriages by which ſo great a part of the profeſſing world periſh to all eternity.

Motive 3.

Thirdly, The deep concernment of your ſouls in the matter to be tryed, ſhould awaken you to the utmoſt diligence about it. The tryals of men for their life, at humane bars, is but a trifle to this: 'tis your eternal happineſs that ſtands or falls with your ſincerity.

It's ſaid in the tryal of opinions, that if a man ſuperſtruct hay or ſtubble upon the foundation, he ſhall ſuffer loſs, yet he himſelf may be ſaved, 1 *Cor.* 3. 12. but if Hypocriſie be in the foundation, there is no ſuch relief, there is no poſſibility of ſalvation in that caſe.

Ah Reader, thou muſt be caſt for ever according to the integrity or hypo-

criſie

criſie of thy heart with God. Summon in then all the powers of thy ſoul, bring thy thoughts as cloſe as it is poſſible to bring them to this matter: if there be any ſubject of conſideration able to drink up the ſpirits of a man, here it is: never was time put to an higher improvement, never were thoughts ſpent upon a more important buſineſs than this is: happy is the man that reſcues the years, months, dayes; yea, the very moments of his life from other imployments, to conſecrate them unto this ſolemn, awful, and moſt important buſineſs.

Motive 4.

Fourthly, How evidential will it be of your ſincerity, when you are willing to come to the tryal of your own hearts!

Suppoſe your doubts and fears ſhould in ſome degree remain with you, yet in this you may take ſome comfort, that if Hypocriſie be in your heart, it is not there by conſent: you are not loth to riſe and come to the tryal, becauſe like *Rachel* you ſit upon your *Idols:* certainly it

it is a good ſign thy heart is right, when it is filled with ſo much fear leſt it ſhould be falſe : you know all the *diſciples* ſaid, Maſter, Is it I ? before *Judas* who was the *Traytor* ſpake a word. *Laſt of all* (ſaith the text) *Judas ſaid, Is it I ?* our willingneſs to be tryed is a good ſign that the deſire of our ſoul is to be right with God.

Motive 5.

Fifthly, Conclude it to be your great advantage to be throughly tryed, whatever you be found to be in the tryal : if you be found ſincere, you are richly rewarded for all your pains and labour : never did that man repent of digging and toyling, that after all hit upon the rich vein that he digged for : what is a vein of gold to a vein of ſincerity !

If upon ſearch you find the contrary, a falſe Hypocritical unſound heart, yet in that very ſad diſcovery you meet with the greateſt advantage that ever you had in your lives for ſalvation. This diſcovery is your great advantage : for now your vain confidence being overturned, and your ungrounded hopes deſtroyed ;

ſtroyed; you lye open to the ſtroke of a deep and effectual conviction of your ſin and miſery, which is the introductive mercy to all other mercies to your ſouls; and ſurely till you come to that, to give up your falſe hopes, and quit your vain pretenſions; there is no hope of you. Chriſt told the *Phariſees*, Matth. 21. 31. *Publicans* and Harlots enter into the Kingdom of Heaven before you: *Publicans* were the worſt ſort of *men*, and *harlots* the worſt ſort of *women*, and yet they ſtood in a fairer way for heaven than the Hypocritical *Phariſees*, becauſe conviction had eaſier acceſs to their conſciences: they had not thoſe defences and pleas of duty and ſtrictneſs to ward off the word, that the ſelf-couzening Phariſees had.

I may ſay of your vain and groundleſs hopes as Chriſt in another ſenſe ſaid to the officers that came to ſeize him in the garden: *if you ſeek me, let theſe go their way*. So 'tis here, if you expect *Chriſt* and ſalvation by him; let your vain confidences go their way: away with your maſques and vizards, if ever you expect to ſee Chriſt. O 'tis your happineſs to

have all theſe things ſtript off, and your nakedneſs and poverty diſcovered, that you may be rich as the Text ſpeaks.

Motive 6.

Sixthly, Conſider how near the day of Death and Judgement approach you. Oh theſe are ſearching dayes wherein you cannot be hid: will your conſciences, think you, be put off in a dying day as eaſily as they are now? no, no; you know they will not.

I have heard of a good man that conſumed not only the greateſt part of the day, but a very conſiderable part of the night alſo in prayer to the great weakening of his body; and being asked by a relation why he did ſo, and prayed to favour himſelf, he returned this anſwer, *O I muſt dye, I muſt dye*: plainly intimating that ſo great is the concernment of dying in a clear aſſured condition, that it's richly worth the expence of all our time and ſtrength to ſecure it.

You know alſo that after death the Judgement, *Heb.* 9. 27. you are haſtening to the Judgement of the great and terrible

terrible God. Death will put you into his ballance to be weighed exactly: and what gives the soul a louder call to search it self with all diligence, whilest it stands at the door of eternity, and its turn is not yet come to go before that awful Tribunal? O that these considerations might have place upon our hearts!

CHAP. XII.

Containing divers helps for the clearing of Sincerity and diſcovery of Hypocriſie.

SECT. I.

YOu ſee of what importance the duty of ſelf-examination is, how many things put a neceſſity and a ſolemnity upon that work. Now in the cloſe of all I would offer you ſome helps for the due management thereof, that is as far as I can carry it, the Lord perſwade your hearts to the diligent and faithful application and uſe of them. The general rules to clear ſincerity are theſe that follow.

Rule 1.

Rule 1.

We may not preſently conclude we are in the ſtate of Hypocriſie, becauſe we find ſome workings of it, and tendencies to it in our ſpirits: the beſt gold hath ſome droſs and alloy in it. Hypocriſie is a weed naturally ſpringing in all ground, the beſt heart is not perfectly clear and free of it: it may be we are ſtumbled when we feel ſome workings or grudgings of this diſeaſe in our ſelves, and looking into ſuch Scriptures as theſe, Joh. 1. 47. *Behold an Iſraelite indeed, in whom there is no guile:* and Pſal. 32. 1. *Bleſſed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile.*

This I ſay may ſtumble ſome upright ſoul, not underſtanding in what an allayed and qualified ſenſe thoſe Scriptures are to be underſtood: for by a *Spirit without guile,* is not underſtood a perſon abſolutely free from all deceitfulneſs, and falſeneſs of heart; this was the ſole *prerogative* of the *Lord Jeſus,* who was ſeparated from ſinners, in

whoſe mouth was no guile found: in whom the Prince of this world in all his tryals and attempts upon him found nothing: but we muſt underſtand it of reigning and allowed Hypocriſie: there is no ſuch guile in any of the Saints: diſtinguiſh the preſence from the predominance of hypocriſie, and the doubt is reſolved.

Rule 2.

Every true ground of humiliation for ſin, is not a ſufficient ground for doubting and queſtioning our eſtate and condition.

There be many more things to *humble* us upon the account of our *infirmity*, than there are to *ſtumble* us upon the account of our *integrity*: it is the ſin and affliction of ſome good ſouls to call their condition in queſtion, upon every ſlip and failing in the courſe of their obedience. This is the way to debar our ſelves from all the peace and comfort of the Chriſtian life: we find that *Joſeph* was once minded to put away *Mary* his Eſpouſed Wife,

not

not knowing that that holy thing which was conceived in her was by the Holy Ghoſt. It is the ſin of Hypocrites to take *braſs* for *gold*, and the folly of Saints to call their *gold, braſs:* be as ſevere to your ſelves as you will, alwayes provided you be juſt: *there is that maketh himſelf rich, and yet hath nothing; and there is that maketh himſelf poor, and yet hath great riches*, Prov. 13. 7. *Hiram* called the Cities *Solomon* gave him *Cabul* dirty, for they pleaſed him not, 1 *Kings* 9. 13. 'tis but an ill requital, an ungrateful return to God, for the beſt of mercies, to undervalue them in our hearts, and be ready upon all occaſions to put them away as worth nothing.

Rule 3.

A ſtronger propenſion in our Nature, and more frequent incidence in our practice to one ſin than another; doth not preſently infer our hypocriſie, and the unſoundneſs of our hearts in Religion. 'Tis true, every Hypocrite hath ſome way of wickedneſs: Some *peccatum in deliciis*,

iniquity that he delights in, and rolls as a ſweet morſel under his tongue; ſome luſt that he is not willing to part with, nor can endure that the knife of mortification ſhould touch it, and this undoubtedly argues the inſincerity and rottenneſs of his heart: and it is true alſo that the nature and conſtitution of the moſt ſanctified man inclines him rather to one ſin than to another, though he allow himſelf in none; yea, though he ſet himſelf more watchfully againſt that ſin than another, yet he may ſtill have more trouble and vexation, more temptation and defilement from it than any other.

As every man hath his proper gift one after this manner and another after that, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 7. 7. ſo every man hath his proper ſin alſo, one after this manner, and another after that: for it is with original ſin, as it is with the juice or ſap of the earth, which though it be the common matter of all kinds of fruits, yet it is ſpecificated according to the different ſorts of plants and ſeeds it nouriſhes: in one it becomes an *apple*, in another a *Cherry*, &c.

ry, &c. Juſt ſo it is in Original Corruption, which is turned into this or that temptation and ſin, according to this or that conſtitution or employment it finds us in: in one it's Paſſion, in another Luſt, in a third Covetouſneſs, in a fourth Levity, and ſo on. Now I ſay the frequent aſſaults of this ſin, provided we indulge it not, but by ſetting double guards labour to keep our ſelves from our *own iniquity*, as *David* did, *Pſal.* 18. 23. will not infer the hypocriſie of our hearts.

Rule 4.

A greater backwardneſs and indiſpoſedneſs to one duty rather than another doth not conclude the heart to be unſound and falſe with God, provided we do not inwardly diſlike and diſapprove any duty of Religion, or except againſt it in our agreement with Chriſt, but that it riſeth meerly from the preſent weakneſs and diſtemper we labour under.

There be ſome duties in Religion, as ſufferings for Chriſt, bearing ſharp reproofs for ſin, *&c.* that even an upright

heart, under a preſent diſtemper may find a great deal of backwardneſs and lathneſs to; yet ſtill he conſents to the Law that it is good, is troubled that he cannot comply more cheerfully with his duty: and deſires to ſtand compleat in all the will of God: perfection is his aim, and imperfections are his ſorrows.

7. Some Chriſtians have much ado to bring their hearts to fixed ſolemn meditation, their hearts fly off from it, but this is their burden that it ſhould be ſo with them. Truth is, it is a very dangerous ſign of Hypocriſie when a mans zeal runs out in one chanel of obedience only, and he hath not a reſpect to all Gods Commandments, as *Phyſitians* obſerve, the ſweating of one part of the body when all the reſt are cold is *ſymptomatical*, and argues an ill habit: but whileſt the ſoul heartily approves all the will of God, and ſincerely deſires to come up to it, and mourns for its backwardneſs and deadneſs to this or that duty, and this is not fixed, but occaſional under ſome preſent indiſpoſition, out of which the ſoul riſeth by the ſame degrees,

degrees, as ſanctification riſeth in him, and the Lord comes in with renewed ſtrength upon him; this I ſay may conſiſt and is very ordinarily found to be the caſe of upright-hearted ones.

Rule 5.

The glances of the eye at ſelf-ends in duties, whileſt ſelf is not the weight that moves the wheels, the principal end and deſign we drive at, and whileſt thoſe glances are corrected and mourned for; do not conclude the heart to be unſound and Hypocritical in Religion: for even among the moſt deeply ſanctified, few can keep their eye ſo ſteady and fixed with pure and unmixed reſpects to the glory of God, but that there will be (alas too frequently) ſome by-ends inſinuating and creeping into the heart.

Theſe like the fowls ſeize upon the ſacrifice, let the ſoul take what pains it can to fray them away. It's well that our High Prieſt bears the iniquities of our holy things for us: *Peter* had too much regard to the pleaſing of men, and did not walk with that upright foot towards

towards the Gentile Chriſtians and the believing Jews in the matter of liberty as became him, *Gal.* 2. 13, 14. for which, as *Paul* ſaith, he ought to be blamed, and did blame him; but yet ſuch a failing as that in the end of his duty did not condemn him. In publick performances there may be too much vanity, in works of charity too much oſtentation, theſe are all workings of Hypocriſie in us, and matters of humiliation to us, but whileſt they are diſallowed, corrected and mourned over, are conſiſtent with integrity.

Rule 6.

The doubts and fears that hang upon and perplex our ſpirits about the hypocriſie of our hearts, do not conclude that therefore we are what we fear our ſelves to be. God will not condemn every one for an hypocrite that ſuſpects, yea, or charges himſelf with Hypocriſie. Holy *David* thought his heart was not right with God, after that great ſlip of his in the matter of *Uriah*, and therefore begs of God to renew a right ſpirit in him,

Pſal.

Pſal. 51. 10, 11, 12. his integrity was indeed wounded and he thought deſtroyed by that fall.

Holy Maſter *Bradford* ſo vehemently doubted the ſincerity of his heart, that he ſubſcribed ſome of his Letters (as Maſter *Fox* tells us) *John Bradford the Hypocrite*, a very *painted Sepulchre*: and yet in ſo ſaying he utterly misjudged the ſtate and temper of his own ſoul.

SECT. II.

WEll then, let not the upright be unjuſt to themſelves in cenſuring their own hearts: they are bad enough, but let us not make them worſe than they are, but thankfully own and acknowledge the leaſt degrees of grace and integrity in them: and poſſibly our uprightneſs might be ſooner diſcovered to us, if in a due compoſure of ſpirit, we would ſit down and attend the true anſwers of our own hearts to ſuch queſtions as theſe are.

Queſtion

Queſtion 1.

Do I make the approbation of God or the applauſe of men the very end and main deſign of my Religious performances; according to 1 *Theſ.* 2. 4. *Col.* 3. 23. Will the acceptation of my duties with men ſatisfie me, whether God accept my duties and perſon or not?

Queſt. 2.

Is it the reproach and ſhame that attends ſin at preſent, and the danger and miſery that will follow it hereafter, that reſtrains me from the Commiſſion of it? or is it the fear of God in my ſoul, and the hatred I bear to ſin as it is ſin? according to *Pſal.* 19. 12. and *Pſal.* 119. 113.

Queſt. 3.

Can I truly and heartily rejoyce to ſee Gods work carried on in the world, and his glory promoted by other hands, though I have no ſhare in the credit and

and honour of it, as *Paul* did ? *Philip.* 1. 18.

Queſt. 4.

Is there no duty in Religion ſo full of difficulty and ſelf-denyal, but I deſire to comply with it : and is all the holy and good will of God acceptable to my ſoul, though I cannot riſe up with like readineſs to the performance of all duties? according to that pattern, *Pſal.* 119. 6.

Queſt. 5.

Am I ſincerely reſolved to follow Chriſt and holineſs at all ſeaſons, however the aſpects of the times may be upon Religion ? or do I bear my ſelf ſo warily, and covertly as to ſhun all hazards for Religion : having a ſecret reſerve in my heart, to launch out no farther than I may return with ſafety ; contrary to the practice and reſolution of upright ſouls? *Pſal.* 116. 3. *Pſal.* 44. 18, 19. *Rev.* 22. 11.

Queſt.

Queſt. 6.

Do I make no Conſcience of committing ſecret ſins, or neglecting ſecret duties? or am I conſcientious both in the one and other according to the rules and patterns of integrity? *Matth.* 6. 5, 6. *Pſal.* 19. 12.

A few ſuch Queſtions ſolemnly propounded to our own hearts in a calm and ſerious hour, would ſound them, and diſcover much of their ſincerity towards the Lord.

SECT.

SECT. III.

AND as upright hearts are too apt to apply to themſelves the threats and miſeries of Hypocrites, ſo Hypocrites on the contrary, are as apt to catch hold of the promiſes and priviledges pertaining to believers.

To detect therefore the ſoul-damning miſtakes of ſuch deceived ſouls, O that theſe following Rules might be ſtudied and faithfully applyed to their conviction, and recovery!

Rule 1.

It is not enough to clear a man from Hypocriſie, that he knows not himſelf to be an Hypocrite. All Hypocrites are not deſigning hypocrites; they deceive themſelves, as well as others: *many will ſay to me in that day, Lord, have we not Propheſied in thy name?* &c. *Matth.* 7. 22. Hell will be a meer ſurpriſal to multitudes of Profeſſours: a man may live and dye in a blind

blind ungrounded confidence of his ſafe condition, and not fear his ruine, till he begin to feel it.

Rule 2.

Zeal and forwardneſs in the cauſe of God, and for the reformation of his worſhip, will not clear a man from the danger of Hypocriſie. *John* was a zealous *reformer*, and yet but a painted *Sepulchre*. In the year 1549. Reformation grew ſo much in reputation even among the *Nobles* and *Gentry* of *Germany*, that many of them cauſed theſe five letters *V. D. M. I. Æ.* being the initial letters of theſe words, *verbum domini manet in æternum*, (i. e.) *the word of the Lord abideth for ever*; to be wrought or embroidered, or ſet in plates; ſome upon their *Cloaks*, and others upon the ſleeves of their Garments; to ſhew to all the world, (ſaith my Author) that forſaking all Popiſh Traditions they would now cleave to the pure doctrine and diſcipline of the eternal word.

John Wolfe, lect. memor. To. 2. ad An. 1549.

And

And no doubt they would have been as good as their word, if what was *embroidered* on their *cloaks*, had been *engraven* on their *hearts*; but *come see my zeal, marrs all.*

Rule 3.

It is no sufficient evidence of a mans own integrity, that he hates hypocrisie in another: for as one proud man may hate another, and he that's Covetous himself, will be apt to censure another for being so; (Lusts may be contrary to one another, as well as all of them contrary to grace) so may an hypocrite loath that in another, which yet he alloweth in himself: nay 'tis the policy of some to declaim against the Hypocrisie of others, thereby to hide their own. *Hypocrites* are none of the most modest censurers of others, *Psal.* 35. 16. A salt jest seasoned their meat.

Rule 4.

The meer performance of private duties, will not clear a man from Hypocrisie: the influence of education, or support of reputation, or the impulse of a convinced Con-

Conſcience may induce a man to it; and yet all this while his heart may not be carried thither with hungry and thirſty deſires after God: it is not the matter of any duty that diſtinguiſhes the ſound, and unſound profeſſour; but the motives, deſigns, and ends of the ſoul in them.

Rule 5.

The vogue and opinion you have got among Chriſtians, of your ſincerity, will not be ſufficient to clear you from the danger of Hypocriſie. Chriſt tells the Angel of *Sardis*, Rev. 3. 1. *Thou haſt a name that thou liveſt, and art dead.* The fall of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, could never have ſhaken the faith of the Saints as it did, had they not had great credit in the Church, and been men of renown for piety among them.

Rule 6.

Your reſpects and love to them that are the ſincere and upright ſervants of God, will not clear you from the danger of being Hypocrites your ſelves: for the bare loving of a Chriſtian is not *Characteriſtical* and evidential

evidential of a mans own Chriſtianity, except he love him, *qua talis*, as he is a Chriſtian, or as he belongs to Chriſt: and ſo his ſincerity becomes the attractive of thy affection. There be a thouſand by-conſiderations and reſpects that may kindle a mans love to the Saints, beſide their integrity.

SECT. IV.

WEll then, if thou wouldſt indeed ſee the unſoundneſs of thy own heart, propound ſuch heart-ſounding Queſtions as theſe to thy ſelf.

Queſt. 1.

Do I engage my heart to approach unto God in the courſe of my duties? or do I go in the round of duties, taking no heed to my heart in them? if ſo, compare this ſymptome of thy Hypocriſie with that in 2 *King.* 10. 3. and that *Ezek.* 33. 31, 32.

Queſt.

Queſt. 2.

Am I not ſwai'd and moved by ſelf-intereſt and carnal reſpects in the wayes of Religion, the accommodation of ſome worldly intereſt, or getting a name and reputation of Godlineſs? if ſo, how apparently do the ſame ſymptomes of Hypocriſie appear upon my ſoul, which did upon *Judas*, *Joh.* 12. 6. and *Jehu*, 2 *Kings* 9. 13, 14.

Queſt. 3.

Have I not ſome ſecret reſerves in my heart, notwithſtanding that face and appearance of zeal which I put on? certainly if there be any ſin that I cannot part with, any ſuffering for Chriſt which I reſolve againſt in my heart: I am none of his *diſciple*, my heart is not right with God, the ſearcher of hearts himſelf being Judge, *Luke* 14. 26, 27.

Queſt.

Queſt. 4.

What Conſcience do I make of ſecret ſins? do I mourn for a vain heart, wandering thoughts, ſpiritual deadneſs? and do I conſcientiouſly abſtain from the practice of ſecret ſins, when there is no danger of diſcovery, no fear of forfeiting my reputation by it? is it Gods eye, or mans that awes me from commiſſion of ſin? certainly, if I allow my ſelf in ſecret ſins; I am not of the number of Gods upright people; whoſe ſpirits are of a contrary temper to mine, *Pſal.* 119. 113. and *Pſal.* 19. 12.

SECT. V.

I Will ſhut up all with five or ſix concluding Counſels, (which the Lord impreſs upon the heart of him that writes, and thoſe that ſhall read them) to preſerve and antidote the ſoul againſt the dangerous inſinuation and Leven of Hypocriſie.

Counſel

Counſel 1.

Intreat the Lord night and day for a renewed and right Spirit: all the helps and directions in the world will not antidote and preſerve you from Hypocriſie, nothing will be found able to keep you right, till ſanctification have firſt ſet you right, Ezek. 36. 27. *I will put my ſpirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes.*

A *Bowle* may keep by a ſtraight line, ſo long as the impreſſed force of the hand that delivered it remains ſtrong upon it; but as that wears off, ſo its motion fails; and its own *Bias* ſwayes and turns it: a fright of conſcience, a pang of warm affection, or the influence of ſome great example, or a good education may influence an unrenewed ſoul; and puſh it on in the way of Religion for a ſeaſon; but the heart ſo influenced muſt and will return to its own natural courſe again. And I think there wants nothing but time; or a ſuitable temptation to diſcover the true temper of many a profeſſours ſpirit: pray therefore as that holy man did,

Pſal.

Pſal. 119. 80. *Let my heart be ſound in thy ſtatutes that I be not aſhamed.*

Counſel 2.

Always ſuſpect and examine your ends in what you do: Sincerity and hypocriſie lye much in your ends and deſigns: as they are, ſo are you. The intentions of the heart lye deep. A man may do the ſame action to an holy end, and his perſon and ſervice be accepted with God; which another doing for a corrupt end, it may be reckoned his ſin; and both his perſon and ſervice be abhorred by the Lord: we find two men riding in one Chariot, and both of them concerned in the ſame expedition; *Jehu* the ſon of *Nimſhi* and *Jonadab* the ſon of *Rechab*, 2 *Kings* 10. 15, 23. but though the work they engaged in was one and the ſame, yet the different ends they aimed at, made the ſame action an excellent duty in *Jonadab*, and an act of vile Hypocriſie in *Jehu*: *idem quod duo faciunt, non eſt idem*: it was the ſaying of a good ſoul, commended for a good action; the work indeed is good, but I fear the ends of it. Self-ends are creep-

ing and inſinuating things into the beſt actions.

Counſel 3.

Scare your ſelves with the daily fears of the ſin that is in, and the miſery that will follow hypocriſie: look upon it as the moſt odious ſin in the eyes of God, and men: to want holineſs is bad enough, but to ſimulate and pretend it when we have it not, is double impiety: to make Religion (the moſt glorious thing in the world) a meer ſtirrup to preferment, and a covert to wickedneſs; Oh how vile a thing is it! God made Chriſt a *Sacrifice* for ſin, and the Hypocrite will make him a *Cloak* for ſin.

And as to the puniſhments that follow it, they are ſuitable to the nature of the ſin; for as hypocriſie is out of meaſure ſinful; ſo the reward and puniſhment of it, will be out of meaſure dreadful. *Mat.* 24. 51. *He ſhall cut him aſunder, and appoint him his portion with hypocrites, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.*

Counſel

Counsel 4.

Be daily at work in the mortification of those Lusts that breed hypocrisie. It's plain without much sifting, that pride, vain-glory, self-love, and a worldly heart are the seeds out of which this cursed plant springs up in the souls of men. Dig but to the root, and you shall certainly find these things there; and till the Lord help you to kill and mortifie these, hypocrisie will spring up in all your duties to God, and in all your converses with men.

Counsel 5.

Attend the native voice of your own consciences in the day of sickness, fear or trouble, and take special notice of its checks, or upbraidings, which like a stitch in your side will gird you at such times: Commonly in that lyes your greatest danger: beware of that evil which Conscience brands and marks at such times, whether it be your living in the practice of some secret sin, or in the neglect of some known duty: these frights of Conscience mark out the corruption wherein your danger mostly lyes.

Counſel 6.

Let us all that profeſs Religion be uniform and ſteady in the profeſſion and practice of it, without politick reſerves, and by ends.

O take heed of this *Laodicean* neutrality and indifferency which Chriſt hates: be ſure your ground be good, and then be ſure you ſtand your ground. The Religion of time-ſervers is but Hypocriſie: they have ſluices in their Conſciences which they can open or ſhut as occaſion requires: every *Fox* will have at leaſt two holes to his Den, that if one be ſtopt, he may eſcape at the other. The hypocrite poyſeth himſelf ſo evenly in a mediocrity, that as it was ſaid of *Baldwin*, Let *Anthony* win, let *Auguſtus* win; all is one: So let *Chriſt* win, or let *Antichriſt* win, he hopes to make every wind that can blow, ſerviceable to waft him to the port of his own intereſt.

The Hypocrite hath alwayes more of the *Moon*, than of the *Sun*; little light, many ſpots, and frequent changes: it's eaſier to him to *bow* to the croſs, than to *bear* the Croſs; to ſin than to ſuffer.

Our own ſtory tells us of a poor ſimple woman

woman that lived both in the reigns of Q. *Mary*, and Q. *Elizabeth*; and would conſtantly ſay her prayers both in *Latine* and *Engliſh*, that ſhe might be ſure to pleaſe one ſide or other; and let God, ſaid ſhe, take which likes him beſt: what is noted as an act of ridiculous ſimplicity in her, the time-ſerving hypocrite accounts a point of deep policy in himſelf.

The times under *Diocleſian* were *Pagan*, under *Conſtantine*, *Chriſtian*; under *Conſtantius*, *Arian*; under *Julian*, *Apoſtate*; and under *Jovian*, *Chriſtian* again: and all this within the ſpace of ſeventy years, the age of one man. O what ſhifting, and ſhuffling was there among the men of that generation! the changes of weather ſhew the unſoundneſs of mens bodies, and the changes of times, the unſoundneſs of their ſouls.

Chriſtian, if ever thou wilt manifeſt and maintain thine integrity, be a man but of one deſign, and be ſure that be an honeſt and good deſign, to ſecure heaven whatever becomes of earth: to hold faſt integrity whatever thou art forced to let go for its ſake.

Take heed of *pious frauds*: certainly it

was the *Devil* that firſt married thoſe two words together, for they never did nor can agree betwixt themſelves, nor was ever ſuch a marriage made in heaven.

Never ſtudy to model Religion and the exerciſes thereof in a conſiſtency with, or ſubſerviency to your fleſhly intereſts: if your Religion be but a mock Religion, your reward ſhall be but a mock heaven, that is, a real hell.

O the vanity and inutility of theſe projects and deſigns! men ſtrive to caſt themſelves into ſuch modes, and ſtint themſelves to ſuch meaſures of Religion, as they think will beſt promote, or ſecure their earthly intereſts: but it often falls out contrary to their expectation, their deep policies are ridiculous follies, they become the grief and ſhame of their friends, and the ſcorn and ſong of their enemies. And often it fares with them as with him that placed himſelf in the middle of the Table, where he could neither reach the diſh above him, nor that below him, *Eſuriunt medii*, &c. and (which is the very beſt of it) if earthly intereſts be accommodated by ſinful neutrality, and a *Laodicean* indifferency in Religion,

Religion, yet no good man ſhould once feel a temptation to embrace it, except he think what is wanting in the ſweetneſs of his ſleep, may be fully recompenced to him by the ſtatelineſs of his bed, and richer furniture of his Chamber; I mean that a fuller and higher condition in the world, can make him amends for the loſs of his inward peace, and the quiet repoſe of a good conſcience: theſe by-ends and ſelf-intereſts are the little paſſages through which hypocriſie creeps in upon the Profeſſours of Religion.

O let this be your rejoycing which was *Pauls, the Teſtimony of your Conſcience, that in all ſincerity and godly ſimplicity, not in fleſhly wiſdom, but by the grace of God, you have had your Converſations in this world,* 2 Cor. 1. 12.

Let that be your daily prayer and cry to heaven, which was *Davids*, Pſal. 25. 21. *Let integrity and uprightneſs preſerve me, for I wait on thee.*

Counſel 7.

Keep your hearts day and night under the awe of Gods all-ſeeing eye: remember

ber he beholds all your wayes, and ponders all your thoughts; how covertly ſoever hypocriſie may be carryed for a time, all muſt and will out at laſt, *Luke* 12. 3. ſecreſie is the main inducement to hypocriſie, but it will fall out with the hypocrite as it did with *Otrocar* the King of *Bohemia*, who refuſed to do homage to *Rodulphus* the *Emperour*, till at laſt chaſtiſed with war, he was content to do him homage privately in a Tent: but the *Tent* was ſo contrived by the *Emperours* ſervants that by drawing one Cord it was taken all away; and ſo *Otrocar* preſented on his knees doing homage in the view of three Armies.

Reader, awe thy heart with Gods eye: know that he will bring every ſecret thing into Judgement. Thus did *Job*, and it preſerved him, *Job* 31. 1, 4. Thus did *David*, and it preſerved him, *Pſal.* 18. 21, 22, 23. Thus do thou alſo, and it will preſerve thee, blameleſs and without guile to the day of Chriſt.

FINIS.